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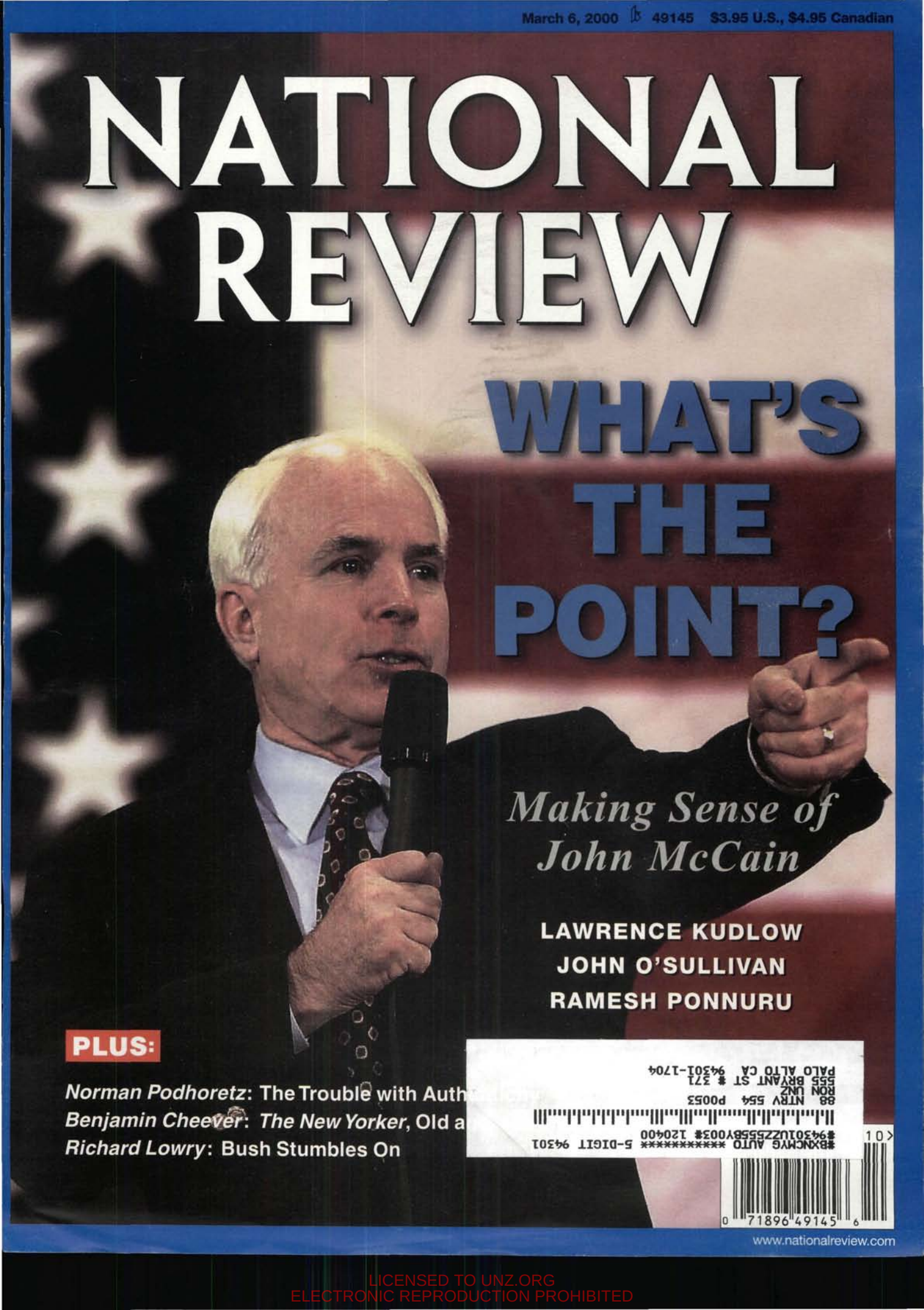

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Making Sense of John McCain

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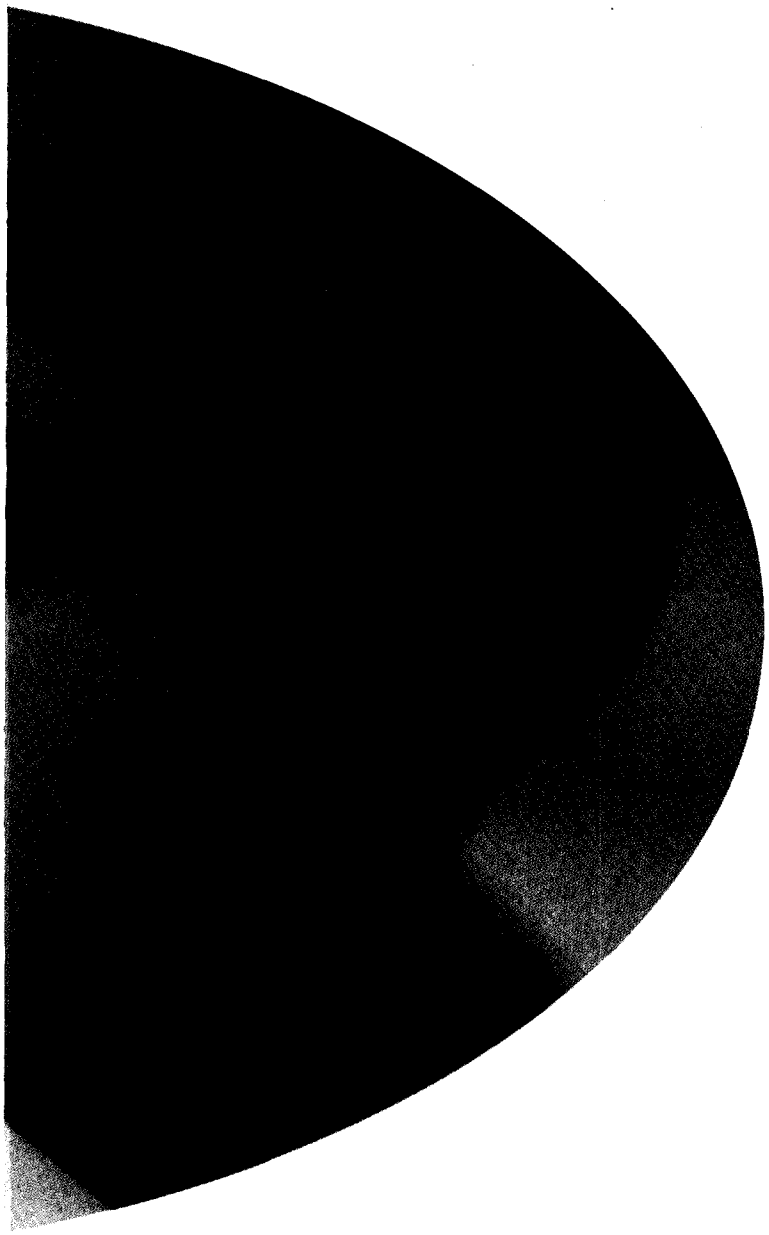

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NATIONAL REVIEW

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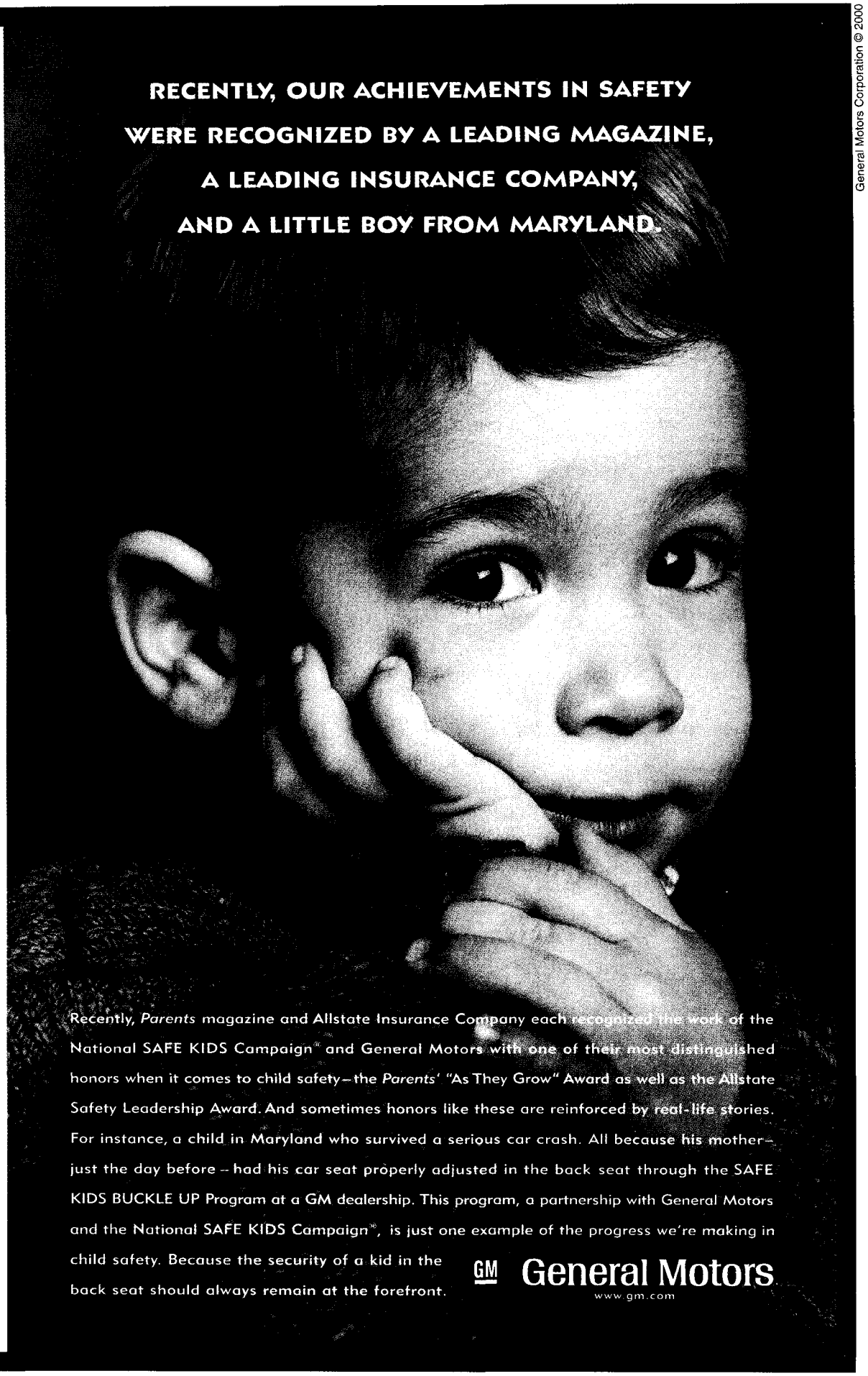
RECENTLY, OUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN SAFETY WERE RECOGNIZED BY A LEADING MAGAZINE, A LEADING INSURANCE COMPANY, AND A LITTLE BOY FROM MARYLAND.



Recently, *Parents* magazine and Allstate Insurance Company each recognized the work of the National SAFE KIDS Campaign® and General Motors with one of their most distinguished honors when it comes to child safety—the *Parents'* "As They Grow" Award as well as the Allstate Safety Leadership Award. And sometimes honors like these are reinforced by real-life stories. For instance, a child in Maryland who survived a serious car crash. All because his mother—just the day before—had his car seat properly adjusted in the back seat through the SAFE KIDS BUCKLE UP Program at a GM dealership. This program, a partnership with General Motors and the National SAFE KIDS Campaign®, is just one example of the progress we're making in child safety. Because the security of a kid in the back seat should always remain at the forefront.

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NATIONAL REVIEW

March 6 issue; printed February 16

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■ LETTERS ■

PINOCHET'S ENEMIES

In his piece about Augusto Pinochet and his "leftist" enemies, Anthony Daniels makes a couple of grievous factual errors ("Of All the Dictators . . . ," Feb. 7). First of all, he is entirely wrong that "there was not a peep" of protest when the former Ethiopian ruler, Mengistu, went to South Africa for medical treatment. In fact, Human Rights Watch issued a stream of letters and press releases to the South African government and media, and helped to organize local human-rights groups to hold a press conference calling for Mengistu's detention. So Daniels is flat wrong on this point.

Secondly, Daniels appears not to have heard about Human Rights Watch's efforts to have Chad's former dictator, Hissein Habre, indicted for crimes against humanity in Senegal, where he now resides. After many months of work compiling documentation and preparing legal briefs, I'm pleased to say that this effort has borne fruit, and Habre is now under house arrest in Dakar.

Perhaps Mr. Daniels was not including Human Rights Watch in his general screed against human-rights activists on "the Left." If so, he is entirely correct. Human Rights Watch is eager to pursue dictators from right and left in its efforts to bring those guilty of crimes against humanity to justice.

Carroll Bogert
Human Rights Watch
New York, N.Y.

ANTHONY DANIELS RESPONDS: *I should have written "hardly a peep." But only self-importance could have disguised from Ms. Bogert the massive disparity between a few belated letters and press releases in South Africa by her own organization about the crimes of Mengistu and the extreme and prolonged concentration of the Western media on the crimes of Pinochet.*

For Human Rights Watch to be as consistent as it claims to be, it must press for the punishment of present as well as ex-dictators. Since dictatorship in large parts of the world is unlikely to be a phenomenon confined to the past, this would be a recipe for perpetual war. Meanwhile, in light of the Pinochet case, no present dictator is likely to stand down.

AT THE GATES

I had thought that I could no longer be shocked (or disappointed) by Robert H. Bork's utterances on the government's attack on Microsoft. Bork now claims ("Against Microsoft," Feb. 7) that "there are numerous successful instances of predation." If so, it comes as a surprise to anyone who has read his *Antitrust Paradox*, where his analysis of predation mentioned only two "possible" cases. Yet even there, he qualified such possibilities with statements like, "There was, of course, no evidence cited that this was what happened."

In my own research on all the predation cases brought before appeals courts from 1963 to 1988, I found no evidence that the cases fit any of the numerous theories of predation. Cases most frequently seemed to be brought against large firms simply because they were successful. Suits were based upon the harm to competitors and not the harm done to customers.

Bork claims that "any price decline [for operating systems] is owing to machine and chip manufacturers," not to Microsoft. Yet, take Microsoft's dominance over word-processing and spreadsheet software. Microsoft Word has been the top-selling word-processing program since 1992. Yet the average price of word-processing software has fallen by almost 70 percent, reversing an upward trend. And since Microsoft's Excel displaced Lotus as the top spreadsheet in 1993, prices have dropped 60 percent.

John R. Lott Jr.
New Haven, Conn.

ROBERT H. BORK RESPONDS: *Mr. Lott may have found no instances of real predation from 1963 to 1988, but I suggest that he look at* Landmarks Holding Corp. *v.* Bermant *(1981) and numerous other cases on sham litigation. As my book,* The Antitrust Paradox, *explained, predation is possible when the predator need not outspend his victim to succeed. That is true both of sham litigation and of Microsoft's tactics. His "shock" and "disappointment" at my utterances would be alleviated by an adequate understanding of the principles involved and the empirical support for them.*

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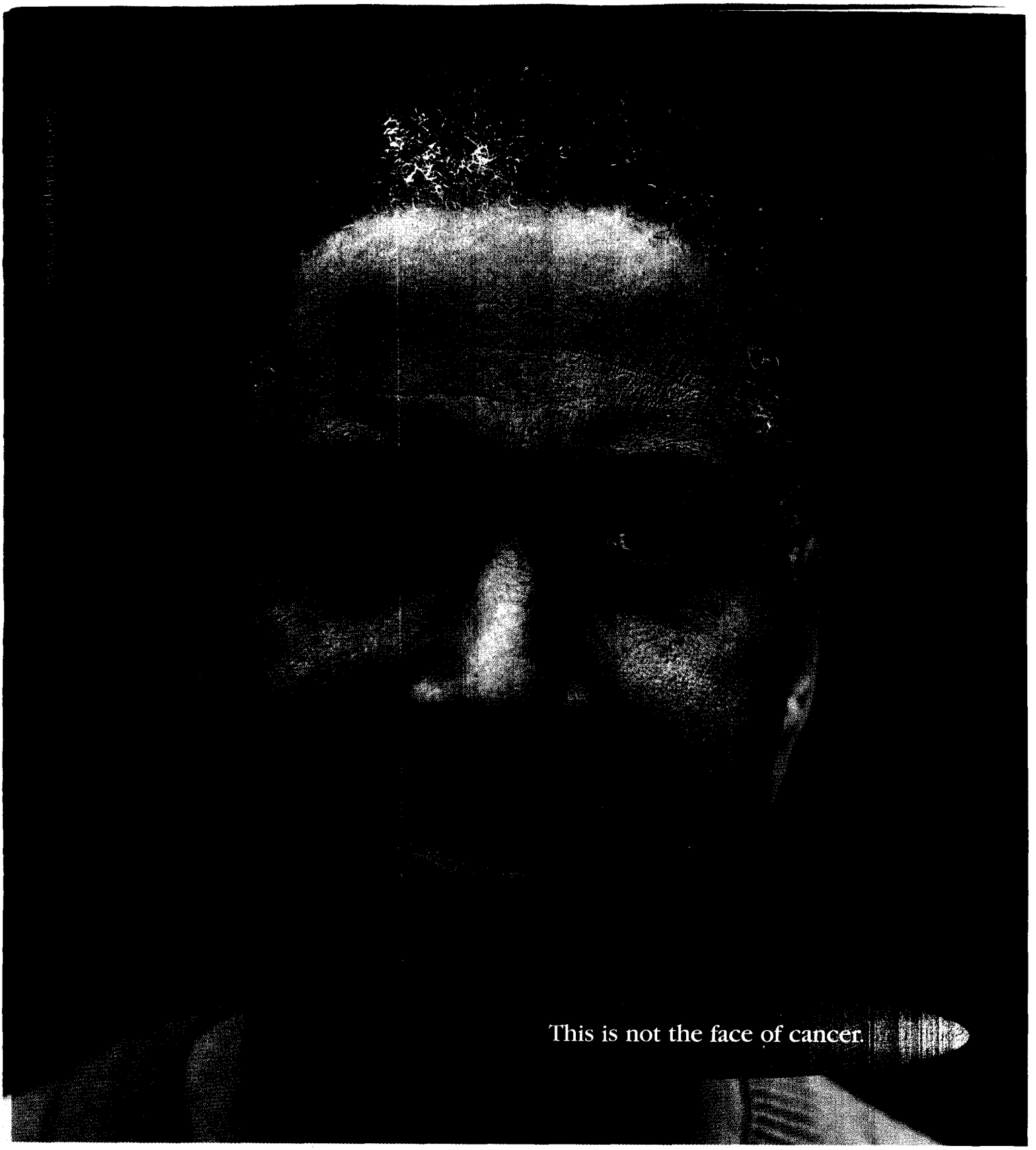

It's the face of Jim Williams. A father and a pilot, he has been in remission from prostate cancer for over eight years. As someone who did two combat tours in Vietnam, he knows war. Still, he considers prostate cancer his ultimate battle. Jim relies on new medicines from America's pharmaceutical companies. They're a major reason why he's in remission. Even though more people are surviving prostate cancer than ever before, pharmaceutical company researchers won't give up until there is a cure. Their relentless search allows people like Jim to face a future filled with hope.

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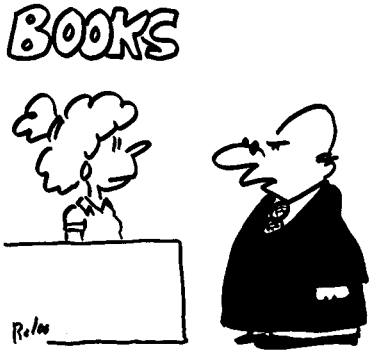
■ FOR THE RECORD ■

■ **Bill Bradley**, on **Al Gore**: "I think he has to explain more thoroughly than he has what was happening at the Buddhist temple . . . I mean, if he didn't know it was a fundraiser, then he was spectacularly naïve. If he did know it was a fundraiser, then he really did something wrong." . . . Gore performs with 100 members of Gay Men's Chorus at Lincoln Center in New York. . . . Gore campaign tells reporters summit with **Al Sharpton** won't happen and that visit to daughter's New York apartment is a family matter, but later admits Gore met with Sharpton at **Karenna Gore Schiff**'s residence. . . . Gore, in 1976 *Nashville Banner* article: "I don't believe a woman's freedom to live her own life, in all cases, outweighs the fetus's right to life." . . . **James Carville** says Gore should pick former Treasury secretary **Robert Rubin** as running mate. . . . Bradley, on *Meet the Press*: "I have to take off on March 7." . . . **Michael Jordan** endorses Bradley.

■ *Detroit News* asks **John McCain**, "What's the first thing you would do as president?" Replies McCain: "Call in **John Kerry, Bob Kerrey, Joe Biden, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Henry Kissinger, Dick Lugar, Chuck Hagel**, and several others and say we've got to get foreign policy, national-security issues back on track." That's four Democrats and three Republicans. . . . **Marvin Bush**, brother of **George W. Bush**, in *U.S. News & World Report*, before breaking off comments to reporters: "That great sucking sound you hear is the sound of the media's lips coming off John McCain's . . ." South Carolina state representative **Todd Rutherford** advises fellow Democrats: "Support the weaker candidate in the Republican primary because he can't beat your opponent in the general election." . . . **Alan Keyes** threatens to bolt GOP if McCain wins nomination. . . . Rep. **John Kasich** (R., Ohio): "Do I think any of them could be as good a president as me? No. But I couldn't raise the money." . . . **Donald Trump** says he won't run for president in 2000, leaving **Pat Buchanan** frontrunner for Reform-party nomination and fueling speculation about a third **Ross Perot** candidacy. . . . House Republicans worry McCain would campaign against them in fall, not with them.

■ In *National Journal* analysis of voting records, Sen. **Phil Gramm** (R., Tex.) and Rep. **Wally Herger** (R., Calif.) named most conservative. . . . Rep. **Mary Bono** (R., Calif.) schedules fundraiser at **Cher** concert in Washington. . . . **Sheila Burke**, former top aide to Sen. **Bob Dole**, becomes official at Smithsonian. . . . Missouri pols lobby to name State Department building after President **Truman**. . . . Arkansas supreme court gives President **Clinton** 30 days to respond to ethics complaint before court's Committee on Professional Conduct, which could lead



"Oh, come on—the Constitution can't be out of print!"

to disbarment. . . . Donors to Clinton library include **Farhad Azima**, whose 1997 contribution of $137,000 to Democratic National Committee was returned because of links to Iran-contra scandal, reports MSNBC. . . . Banners at **First Lady**'s announcement speech read "Hillary!" with no last name given. . . . Hillary Clinton: "My attitude is I like to eat and we should support agriculture."

■ Florida judge bans distribution of "Choose Life" license plates following lawsuit by National Organization for Women. . . . Wisconsin court says statue of **Jesus** standing in privately owned section of Marshfield city park violates separation of church and state. . . . Army major **James Garrett** on "don't ask, don't tell," in *New York Times*: "Going to a gay bar, having a gay roommate off base, marching in a gay parade, that's associational behavior. That is not against the policy." . . . University of New Mexico professor **Charles Truxillo** calls for creation of Hispanic country to be carved out of American Southwest and northern Mexico: "We will one day be a majority and reclaim our birthright by any means necessary and we shouldn't shy away." . . . New Mexico supreme court rules that citizens can't be excluded from jury duty for not being able to speak English. . . . Nine colleges and universities, including Michigan and Penn State, agree to admit students on basis of ability to work with Lego blocks. . . . Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Va., plans to raise engine from sunken Civil War ironclad *Monitor*. . . . **Christopher Hitchens** to debate Catholic League's **William Donohue** on resolution: "The American cultural elite is hostile to religion in general and to Catholicism in particular." Call 212-682-1336 for tickets to March 23 event or write to ChristiFideles / 143 East 43rd Street / New York, N.Y. 10017.

■ China executed more people in 1998 than rest of world combined, says Amnesty International. . . . Saudi terrorist **Osama Bin Laden** rumored to have liver ailment requiring treatment outside Afghanistan refuge. . . . Czech leader **Vaclav Klaus** says **Joerg Haider**'s participation in Austrian government "is the lesser evil compared with the attempt of the EU to oppose the sovereign decision-making of one of its members." . . . Israeli court rejects petition by **Jonathan Pollard**, convicted American spy, to force Jerusalem to take up case with U.S. authorities. . . . Helsinki decides not to place statue of **Lenin** in park bearing Soviet leader's name, following local protests. . . . New measurements by National Geographic Society increase height of Mt. Everest by 7 feet, to 29,035 feet.

■ **Jay Leno**: "Hillary's announcement was on the front page of every newspaper Monday. I mean, she's been saying for over a year she's going to run. I guess they figure whenever a Clinton keeps a promise, that's front-page news." **NR**

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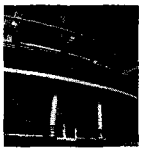

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THE WEEK

■ He's a two-fisted drinker, is Al Gore. First he told the FBI that he missed 1995 White House discussions planning (illegal) fundraising calls for the coming campaign. Then, when his comments surfaced in the minutes, Gore admitted that he had attended, but said he might have been out of the room during the naughty bits because he "drank a lot of iced tea," and had to go to the john. No note takers in there, fortunately.

■ If he used the bathroom off the Oval Office hallway, did he knock first to make sure it was empty?

■ What does this bode for NSC meetings in a Gore administration? "Mr. President, we have Russian incoming! Mr. President? Mr. President?"

■ Is this how Al Gore earned his reputation as a whiz kid?

■ Steve Forbes exited the presidential race after a disappointing performance in Delaware. Our views on his candidacy are given by WFB in a column that appears on page 66. We will say here, however, that when the second Greenspan Commission gets around to privatizing Social Security in 2005, reporters will have to look back to Forbes's 1996 campaign as a milestone (as well as to Pete du Pont's 1988 campaign). Forbes's 2000 campaign has also had salutary effects. By trying to unite social conservatives and economic conservatives, he has helped conservatism resist the strong centrifugal forces of the last few years. You could conclude that Forbes's withdrawal proves that the basic idea of a coalition of social conservatives and economic conservatives, oriented toward liberty, is dead. But that's not the lesson Ronald Reagan drew from Barry Goldwater's defeat; and it's not the lesson that should be drawn by anyone who wishes to be Reagan's heir.

■ Looking at the feeble showings of Steve Forbes, Alan Keyes, and Gary Bauer in New Hampshire, William Kristol, among others, has decided that the conservative movement is "finished." If they mean that a cohesive conservative political enterprise is finished, at least for the time being, they are right, as we ourselves have said, early and often. As for the movement, we still want what we want. We wanted it when we were much smaller and weaker than Messrs. Forbes, Keyes, and Bauer were in New Hampshire. If we become that small and weak again, we will keep on wanting. Principle doesn't follow the election returns; neither does the need to uphold it.

■ The chairman of the South Carolina Democratic party calls the negative campaigning in the GOP primary "an electronic charnel house. . . . Bush and McCain have not only taken the gloves off, they've put the brass knuckles on." Some push-poll phone calls from Bush, and a McCain ad comparing Bush to Clinton—this is a charnel house? In 1828, Andrew Jackson's supporters said that President John Quincy Adams, when he was a diplomat, had pimped an American girl to the czar of Russia, and Adams's supporters said that Ol' Hick'ry and his wife were bigamists and adulterers. That was dirt, and the norm in American presidential campaigns for a century and a half. The other meaning of "negative campaigning," in these effete times, is to criticize one's opponent forthrightly on the issues. There hasn't been nearly enough of that between the frontrunners in the GOP race so far.

■ George W. Bush has been criticized for speaking at Bob Jones University, which long denied admittance to blacks and still bans interracial dating. Both Bush and John McCain have refused to express opposition to the flying of the Confederate battle flag over the South Carolina statehouse. The controversies do not concern anything important, except for symbolism—which in politics is very important, indeed. Many Americans, and not only blacks, will conclude that the Republican party is, through its presidential candidates, expressing indifference to black sensibilities. The irony here is that Bush, McCain, and the GOP establishment generally have ducked the issue of racial preferences for fear of inspiring just this reaction. If they took on preferences, they might at least earn grudging respect from some of their opponents for standing on principle. As it is, no such respect has been gained, or earned.

■ Al Gore, or rather "Al Gore," the inauthentic man programmed to be virtually "alive," has been reprogrammed once again. "President Clinton," said the robot, "has vetoed every DAMN one of those anti-union measures the Republicans have sent to him. And if you elect me, I'll stop them with a veto too." The cigar-store wooden Indian and teacher's pet Dudley Do-Right was first reprogrammed as Fighter/Liar. Now a new floppy disk has been inserted in the slot between its shoulder blades: Good Ol' Boy. The robot says DAMN. But the program still needs work. The robot's arms still swing for emphasis on subordinate clauses, its ceramic face resists all marks of experience, and its eyebrows still fly up and down like crazy venetian blinds. Press REJECT.

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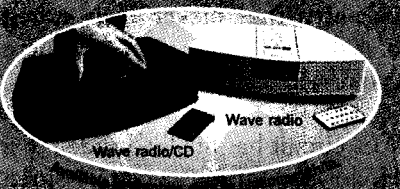

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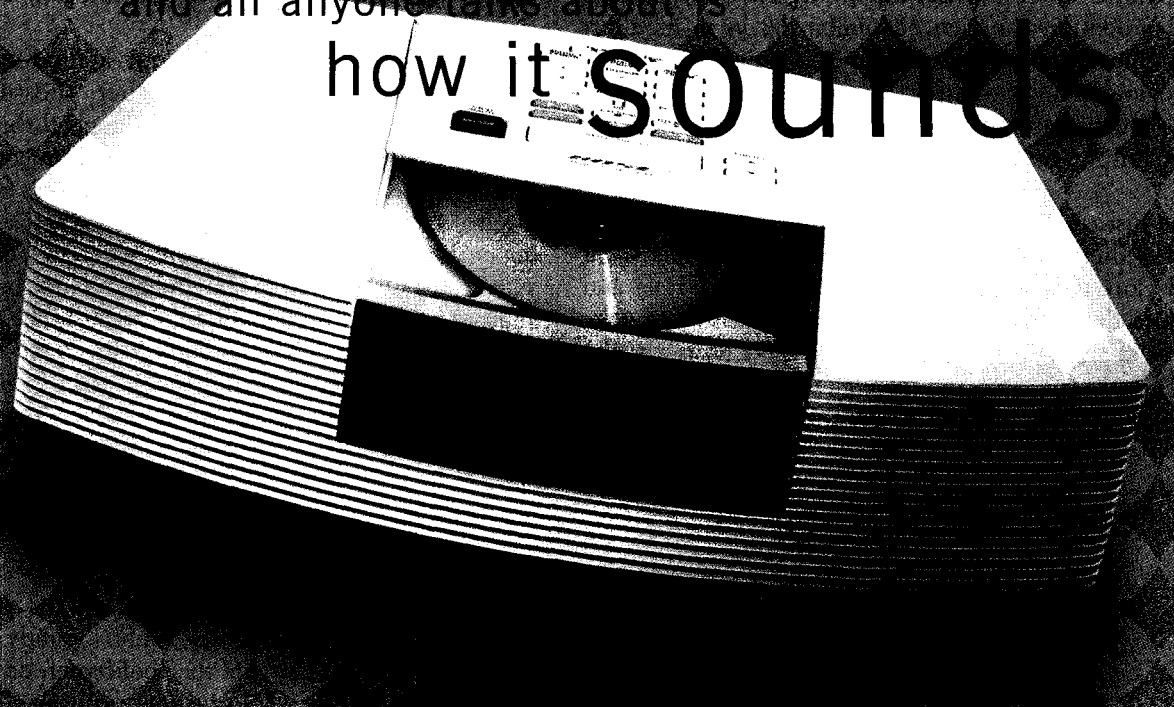
To think all that time making it small,
and all anyone talks about is
how it sounds



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■ Jesse Ventura bolted the Reform party, just a day before an ally of his was booted out as its chairman. Donald Trump, too, has decided that he wants no part of Reform's nominating contest. The political repercussions—Is the nomination now to go to Buchanan? McCain? Perot himself?—will be much studied, especially among Republicans, whose voters are more tempted by Reform than Democrats are. The Reformers' travails are an object lesson in the folly of starting a nonideological third party. The Reformers hate how the politicians bicker and get nothing done; in their own party, they bicker even more and accomplish even less. A party that doesn't know where it wants to go is likely to go nowhere.

■ The D.C. circuit has finally decided to investigate Judge Norma Holloway Johnson's practice of removing politically sensitive cases from the random-assignment pool and simply handing them to judges appointed by President Clinton. She has done it four times, including once with a case involving Webster Hubbell. On another front, the Arkansas supreme court is moving forward with an ethics complaint that could lead to Clinton's disbarment. The news in both cases is welcome, if tardy. Each time, it required the intervention of outside actors. The D.C. circuit needed several pushes from Rep. Howard Coble, a Republican from North Carolina, and the Southeastern Legal Foundation experienced similar delays in its effort against Clinton, even in the wake of a contempt citation issued against him by a district-court judge last April. The wheels of justice are turning slowly—at least until the next time a Clinton agent hits the brakes.

■ If the Justice Department is serious about getting to the bottom of the Buddhist-temple fundraising scandal, it will call Al Gore as a witness in the trial of Maria Hsia and make him deny—for the first time under oath—that he had any idea those dozens of monks and nuns writing $1,000 checks to Democrats were pawns in a money-laundering scheme. Of course, the department has no plans to do so; it now claims that Hsia duped Gore and the entire Democratic financial apparatus at the 1996 event. The trial is designed, not to find the truth, but to make sure the law never touches the people who were to benefit from Gore's trip to the Hsi Lai Temple. By moving the venue from California to Washington, D.C., Justice can appear to have come down hard on Hsia but almost guarantee that she faces light sentencing. Acquittal, for that matter, is a possibility in the courtroom of Judge Paul Friedman, a Clinton appointee who previously dismissed five felony counts against Hsia, only to see them reinstated on appeal, and who currently refuses to admit the grand-jury testimony of two nuns who have fled the country. The Clintonoid damage control continues.

■ Trent Lott ushered two more Clinton judges through confirmation, thwarting an attempt by Oklahoma senator Jim Inhofe to block the nominations. Inhofe and 18 other senators have vowed to stop all of Clinton's nominees because of what they regard as his abuses of his recess-appointment powers. Though all 19 voted against Lott, the majority leader hopes that Inhofe's insurrection has been quashed. Inhofe should instead redouble his efforts. Clinton—a lawbreaker himself, and a man whom almost all Republican senators voted to remove from office—should not be appointing anyone to oversee the law.

■ Mayor Rudy Giuliani sent out a fund-appeal letter attacking Hillary Clinton for her "hostility toward America's religious traditions." She replied that she was a lifelong Methodist and that Giuliani had "injected religion" into the race. We cannot judge Mrs. Clinton's faith, but she is also a devout liberal, which means politically that she supports an un-neutral neutrality whereby public schools may not post the Ten Commandments, but public money must subsidize blasphemous tripe such as the "Sensation" exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum. It was a fair question for Giuliani to raise. Mike Long, chairman of the New York Conservative Party, then asked a question of Richard Viguerie, the conservative direct-mail veteran who produced the letter. Long pointed out that Giuliani supports partial-birth abortion, gun control, and gay rights. How does that make him a conservative? Also a fair question.

■ The Rev. Al Sharpton, fresh from the embraces of HILLARY!, Gore, and Bradley, is not so subtly threatening riots if the jury acquits the four policemen on trial in the Diallo shooting case. "No justice, no peace," sayeth the Reverend. He needs a lesson in Political Science 101, viz., "The government of the State of New York strives for, but cannot guarantee, justice. It has more than enough power to guarantee peace."

■ Hillary Clinton broke her fast in a restaurant in Albion, N.Y., and didn't leave a tip (the owner had picked up her tab). When the cheeky press made it an issue, Mrs. Clinton

Steel Yourself

Despite the faces Lott affects
Discussing John McCain,
Or stomach cramps the name inflicts
On Armey, there's no pain
So staggering to Beltway pols
As candidates who sag—
A factoid that could find them both
Hitched to the surging nag.

—W. H. von Dreele

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dismissed it as "just another wild story" (even as the Monica Lewinsky story was wild, until the dress was sent to the lab). But shortly after that, the First Lady called the waitress to apologize, though not to offer any dough. New Yorkers with long memories may recall the dismissive judgment of Dan O'Connell, boss of the legendary Albany machine, on Jimmy Walker's Tammany Hall: "flashy dressers and cheap tippers."

■ President Clinton and congressional Republicans both say they want to reduce the "marriage penalty." They are fighting each other because they define that penalty differently. Clinton regards it as a quirk of the tax law that causes many married couples to pay more in taxes than they would if they were single. The Republicans implicitly define it more broadly, as the tax code's failure to treat marriage as the economic partnership it partly is—a failure that hurts one-earner couples as well as two-earner couples. The fixes offered by the two sides therefore differ too. Clinton would cut taxes on two-earner couples to reach parity with singles (as would Gov. Bush in his tax plan), at the cost of treating one-earner couples worse than two-earner couples. Congressional Republicans would cut taxes on all married couples. Clinton advisers have threatened a veto of the bill. Republicans are in the right, and should stand their ground.

■ Deported wholesale by Stalin, and bombed by democratic Russia, the Chechens are supposed to understand who their masters are. No matter who occupies the Kremlin, the Chechens have to suffer because they see themselves as a people with a proud identity of their own. Grozny, their capital, is no more. The ill and the old are emerging from the cellars in which they endured the recent long and brutal siege. Unable to flee earlier, they are now being driven out to whatever destinations they can find. There is no food. Dogs are gnawing at corpses in the rubble. The city echoes with explosions as demolition squads dynamite the shells of buildings indiscriminately gutted by artillery and missiles. Grozny is to be closed, to remain a ruin forever. Was it really necessary to emulate the ferocity of a President Hafez Assad turning his guns on other Syrians at Hama, or a President Milosevic massacring other Yugoslavs? Russian leaders call themselves democrats, but evidently they have learned nothing and forgotten nothing from their history. Missiles and artillery continue to flatten outlying towns and villages. Chechens now have a Stalingrad of their own, and their children in turn will learn the lesson of revenge, and forget nothing.

■ Under Northern Ireland's Good Friday Agreement, the British government and the Unionists gave most ground. Almost the sole concession offered by Irish Republicans was that Sinn Fein would use its good offices to get the IRA to disarm by May of this year. Since Sinn Fein and the IRA are the same people wearing different hats, that was taken as a firm pledge of arms decommissioning. Later, the IRA explained that it could not be bound by a Sinn Fein promise. At that point the power-sharing executive was doomed, since David Trimble's Unionists reasonably object to sharing power with a party that maintains its own private army in case of political defeat. So the Blair government suspended the executive temporarily, in the hope of resuscitating it later. But the habit of appeasement dies hard. Though Sinn Fein/IRA has made no substantial concessions at all during the last five years' negotiations (except for halting the killing of non-Catholics), London has let it be known that it will continue to release convicted terrorists and to deconstruct the Royal Ulster Constabulary—now the only force standing between Ulster and IRA-created anarchy. As Conor Cruise O'Brien has observed, it will be no great boon if an ineffective power-sharing arrangement is replaced by the direct rule of the British government in coalition with the IRA.

■ The after-acquittal life of O. J. Simpson continues to amaze. The other day, his friend, retired linebacker Lawrence Taylor, was interviewed by shock jock Howard Stern. L.T., it seems, plays golf with O.J. a couple of times a month, and they always have a bet. In fact, as Taylor related, "I beat him so bad that one day I said, 'O.J., you owe me more money than you owe Goldman'" (a reference to the father of one of the people Simpson murdered, who won a civil suit against him). Taylor went on to say that people who condemn Simpson tend to go all wobbly when they actually meet him: "A lot of people say things in public, but when they get in your presence, all they want to do is kiss your ass and want photographs. People are so phony. That's what the problem is. You sit there and say things about him, but if he was to walk into your presence, you'd kiss his ass. Be real." Yes, indeed: Be real. If society treated Simpson as the pariah he should be, it might mitigate somewhat the horror of his acquittal.

■ In her memoir, *I'm Wild Again*, Helen Gurley Brown, the editor who brought sex and exclamation points to *Cosmopolitan*, reveals that when she was 24 a middling Hollywood executive kept her (paying her secretarial wages in return for daily sex). "The lovemaking? It wasn't bad, wasn't love, wasn't anything. Not even sure you could call it an affair—an affair is sexier. This was two people copulating." So women's lib, before it began, was what it has been revealed to be, 50 years later, in the Clinton years: a way of making it easier for successful men to hook up with women who are not prostitutes. Sometimes the sex is free, sometimes (in employer/employee situations, from Hollywood to the White House) the men pay. At all times, there are no strings, unless the men become emotionally entangled (which, to the credit of humanity, they sometimes do). Congratulations all around.

■ Grandma! Stop that! In their nun-supervised Florida meeting, Elián's paternal grandmother first bit his tongue,

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then unzipped him and gave him the once-over. "I opened his pants," she boasted in Cuba. "I told him, 'Let me see if it has grown.'" Forget about Castro. Give the kid asylum from Grandma.

■ Resembling Peewee Herman in so many other ways as well, President Clinton loves going to the movies. He was interviewed by critic Roger Ebert, who gushed over Clinton's commonplace remarks, though one of them does stick in the mind. Of Ingrid Bergman, the president said: "I still can't watch that movie [*Casablanca*] without thinking, 'God, I wish I'd known that woman.'"

■ In an effort to attract "minority" and "disadvantaged" students, Colorado College is getting rid of those boring old standardized tests. Lego games are where it's at. In the Lego test, groups of eight to ten students are given a box full of Lego pieces and told that they have ten minutes to build a robot. The food-fight examination is no doubt being developed.

■ *Plus ça change* . . . Nurses at junior highs and high schools in France are passing out "emergency-contraception pills"—some call them abortion pills—to girls, some as young as 12. The government's decision to authorize this practice comes seven months after the pill was first approved for over-the-counter sale in France. Here in the New World, we're a little behind. A new study from Princeton recommends that we get moving. The "morning-after kit," as it is known, isn't even over-the-counter yet. If only the Food and Drug Administration were a bit more efficient and the pharmaceutical companies a bit less shy, we, too, could be as "modren" as the French.

■ *The New Republic* did one of its young employees a terrible disservice by publishing her musings on small-town life, big-city life, and her baby. She grew up in humble Indiana, you see, where "amusements were wholesome and basic" and "traditional family values were the norm": "The men went to work and the women stayed home and took care of the children." A few years ago, though, she left all that behind for the bright lights of . . . Connecticut Avenue. What bliss! "There was an energy to Washington that was almost unimaginable in small-town Indiana. . . . The streets of Washington never failed to stir me. [Where, exactly, did she hang out?] . . . Having children right away didn't seem as important as the next party or the next charity function." But then: preggers. Would she have to abandon *TNR* and everything golden, or join "the selfish, guilt-ridden ranks of working mothers"? Was there ever a doubt? But the beauty part was, she felt no guilt: "When the time came to go back to work, I felt relief." Her "prayers [had been] answered in the form of Lucy," a "middle-aged Peruvian woman" down the street. By now, "it is perfectly clear to me that [Baby] gets more from Lucy than I could give him if I were to stay home." Her conclusion? "Every day I watch my son run into the arms of another woman, every day I listen as they converse delightfully in Spanish—and I know I have made the right decision not only for me but also for my family. The city *has* changed me, but I am a better woman and a better mother for it." This, mind you, is not a parody. Memo to *TNR* editors: You do such staff no favors when you let them embarrass themselves.

CAMPAIGN 2000

The Question of McCain

JOHN MCCAIN'S record, it bears repeating, is quite conservative. He gets low marks from liberal outfits such as Americans for Democratic Action, which gives him a lifetime rating of 9 percent; and high grades from conservative groups such as the National Right to Life Committee, which says he has voted for the pro-life cause over 80 percent of the time. His record, it could even be said, is to the right of George W. Bush's as governor of Texas. True, McCain has advocated quite statist bills on campaign finance and tobacco. If these were his only offenses against conservatism, however, conservatives could judge them to be outweighed by his other positions.

The campaign McCain is running makes that judgment impossible. So far, he has endorsed a patient's bill of rights, a new tax on advertising, federal subsidies for purchases of prescription drugs, peanut-free zones on airlines as a federal entitlement, the Clinton administration's plan to rejigger the census—the liberal positions accumulate by the day. His rhetoric on both taxes and campaign-finance reform has been increasingly tinged by appeals to class envy. It is hard to see how McCain could, on the fiscal principles he is now advocating, look favorably upon Reagan's tax cuts of 1981.

When one sorts through the claims and counterclaims made by Bush and McCain in South Carolina, the results do not speak in the senator's favor. McCain's attacks on Bush for not reducing the debt or providing money for Social Security are, at best, misleading: Bush's plan would reduce the national debt by more than $2 trillion, all of which would be credited to the Social Security trust fund. Bush's charge that McCain has voted for taxpayer funding of political campaigns, meanwhile, is true, and McCain's denials have been deceptive. Also true is Bush's charge that McCain favors a $9 billion tax increase on contributions to churches, colleges, and charities.

Against McCain's recent demagoguery must be set his identification, on the campaign trail, with important and neglected conservative themes: patriotism and self-government. But even here, McCain is a disappointment. An agenda to restore America's cohesion and self-confidence might include a) the repeal of the legal preferences that divide Americans by race, b) restrictions on the mass immigration that makes assimilation difficult, and c) the instruction of all American children in English. A candidate

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committed to self-government might take on election fraud and the judicial usurpation of politics. McCain advocates none of these things. His actual policies would make the problems he points out worse. He would cripple the political parties as vehicles of self-government: Under his reforms, they would be hampered in their ability to fund candidates, to get out the vote, and—if the trend toward open primaries continues—even to pick their own nominees. Voter turnout would likely go down, not up, if his agenda were enacted.

McCain is, for all this, still a conservative, still an attractive candidate. There is that voting record, and the possibility that he might be the GOP's best chance to defeat Al Gore in November. McCain's campaign has been brilliant in its tactics and in its understanding of the American mood. But it has also, in many respects, been dismaying.

CAMPAIGN 2000

A Low, Dishonest Party

CONSERVATIVES suffering from heartburn over the Republican primary race might feel better if they consider the wreckage on the Democratic side. If Al Gore's strengths as a candidate were underestimated for much of 1999, they are being overestimated now.

Gore should have been able to dispose of Bill Bradley's challenge handily. He is a sitting vice president serving in a popular administration that presides over a largely contented nation; Bradley is a weak politician—he never won by large margins in New Jersey—who, moreover, appears to believe that it is still 1964 and that the country has yet to try enacting a Great Society. But Gore barely beat Bradley in New Hampshire. And the exit polls suggest that Gore would have lost if not for the publicity about Bradley's heart condition and the surge by John McCain, which drew independent voters away from Bradley.

On the strength of his New Hampshire win, John McCain—about whom the public still knows little—leads Gore in national polls. Bush, too, started beating Gore in national polls when people knew little about him. Furthermore, Bradley's campaign is hurting Gore's chances in the fall, both by pulling him to the left and by instilling doubts about his honesty.

Gore's "iced-tea excuse," for instance, has resurfaced in the press. When notes from a 1996 meeting appeared to implicate him in violations of campaign-finance laws, Gore told the FBI that he could not recall the details because he drank a lot of iced tea and thus may have been in the restroom at crucial moments.

This sort of duplicity is not incidental to the politics of the Democratic party. Lying is integral to the strategy of the administration that brought us "mend it, don't end it" and "safe, legal, and rare." The defense of abortion—Bradley is accusing Gore of insufficient devotion to the cause, and Gore is proclaiming his lifelong and undying commitment to it—has always depended on lies: about history, about medicine, about the Constitution, about "lumps of protoplasm." Also, both Bradley and Gore have adopted a deceptive position on gay marriage: They claim to be opposed, but are also against doing anything to help the opposition prevail.

The leading Democrats are willing to tell, or to tolerate, any number of lies in the service of their power. The party's behavior during Clinton's impeachment and trial showed the extent to which modern liberalism has become the ideology of living within the lie. The primary race only confirms it.

STILL TRAILING

Hillary announced last week
As a one-name gal;
Garbo would have understood,
Though her White House pal,
Like the Queen of England's duke
Bringing up the rear,
Had a certain wistful look
That recalled King Lear.

—W. H. VON DREELE

LAW

The Chair and Its Enemies

GOV. GEORGE RYAN of Illinois suspended all executions in his state, citing the fact that 13 men who had been sentenced to death since 1977 were ultimately cleared and freed. The governor, himself a supporter of capital punishment, thinks there is something greatly amiss in his state's system of public defense (most defendants, unlike O.J., have to rely on the services of court-appointed drudges).

Yet the Illinois move has been seized on by those who wish to end capital punishment itself. The new technology of DNA testing, in addition to plain old legwork, has caused 85 people to be released from death row since 1973. Wrongfully executing someone, so the argument goes, is a terminal mistake; how can we allow a punishment with such baleful consequences? It is probably no accident that the campaign against the death penalty heated up during the presidential campaign of a Republican governor whose state imposes it with great frequency.

Yet the argument is a smokescreen. Many activities, which no one intends to forbid, statistically generate the deaths of innocent people: driving; flying; building skyscrapers. Sometimes these deaths are caused by the agency of the state: Air Force training accidents; friendly fire during wartime. In the case of wrongfully executed defendants, the state unique-

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ly intends to take life. Still, the deaths of these particular people are accidental: The state wished to kill the guilty party.

The fundamental question is, Does the state have the right to take life as a punishment for atrocious crime? Most societies, most philosophers, and most religious figures have agreed that it does. Capital crimes have sometimes been defined loosely: William Blackstone complained, in the 18th century, of the ferocity of English criminal law. But an obvious place to draw the line of atrocity is willful and cold-blooded murder: If a man expels another from society and this world, then society is entitled to expel him.

What message does society send if it does not? Every year, an average of 20,000 murders and non-negligent manslaughters are committed in the United States (the recent peak was 24,700 in 1991; the trough was 16,910 in 1998). Most of these killings, presumably, were not capital offenses, as the laws define that term today. But that leaves a residue of hundreds of killings a year that were. If the state forswears capital punishment, it is implying that it values the lives of convicted murderers more than the lives of their victims. It will preserve the former, for decades if necessary; it will do its best to safeguard the latter. But if its efforts at policing fail . . . well, accidents happen, and the state just takes on another lifelong guest.

■ NOTES & ASIDES ■

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: You recently stated once again your linguistic credo that you "belong to that grammatical movement that eschews the objective pronoun except after a preposition."

I trust that this does not mean that you could tolerate such sentences as: "Bill saw she yesterday."

At any rate, your aversion to using the who/whom forms properly appears to be an old one, extending over some 50 years.

Since I have been a reader of NR for only a fraction of that time, may I respectfully suggest that you restate your reason for your grammatical allegiance?

If you accept that there is a distinction between "who" and "whom," why do you wish to use the correct form only after a preposition, where discerning the difference is easy, but promptly surrender when correct writing requires logical thought, e.g., in specifying an object of a verb?

Sincerely yours,
Henry Kucera
(fellow essayist, the *AHD*, 2nd Ed.)
Freedom, N.H.

Dear Professor Kucera: Yes, I vividly remember your essay, alongside my own, for the *American Heritage Dictionary*, and am for that reason a little surprised by your orthodoxy on the who/whom business.

I note the Follett/Wensberg *Modern American Usage* and its nice introductory paragraph on the subject: "*who(m), who(m)ever.* The objective form of the pronoun *who* has a hard time asserting its hereditary rights. On one side, it suffers at the hands of those who will put in the *m* where it does not belong, out of fear of being thought uneducated; on the other, it is belabored by free-spirited grammarians [that's me!—WFB] who find it bookish and to be avoided. Between those afraid of sounding ignorant and those afraid of sounding superior, *who(m)* causes increasing and needless discomfort in its users."

I remember with delight the answer Groucho Marx gave to a complicated, periphrastic question: "Whom knows?"

Wensberg gives an example or two of clearly objectionable permissiveness, and then a few that are of okay-informality, e.g., *Who are you thinking of?* and *Who's kidding who?*

I pronounced the movement I think I belong to a little too broadly; thanks for the correction.

Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley: The anti-gun lobby is just not getting the job done.

America must take drastic action to get guns out of our children's schoolbags: We must purge our language of reactionary locutions that foster the gun culture.

It is our moral duty to outlaw the countless gun-related idioms—and idiotisms—that befoul the American tongue.

The short list of far-right expressions that must be eradicated includes such offensive phrases as: son of a gun, big shot/big gun, gun the engine, going great guns, hot shot, and shoot the s***.

Violent verbiage pollutes every aspect of American life: western films: "a shot of rotgut"; classical drama: "to take arms"; historical poetry: "the shot heard round the world"; basketball: "the shot clock"; football: "shotgun formation"; baseball: "rifle the ball to first"; track and field: "the shot put."

Furthermore, we must police America's corporate malefactors. The Quaker Oats Company, for example, boasts that its puffed wheat is "shot from guns." Might not a puffed-wheat boycott prove to be a cereal killer?

And while I'm on the subject of greedy corporations, perhaps the young male horse can be given a less provocative name to avoid publicizing a certain gun manufacturer.

Portentously, an enlightened forebear set an example in eschewing the G-word. Family lore has it that he changed the surname from Cannon.

Let us all pitch in to disarm our lexicon!

Sincerely yours,
Thomas A. Canning
Sea Cliff, N.Y.

Great fun, Canning. Carry on.

Cordially,

—WFB

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■ CAMPAIGN 2000 ■

Step by Faltering Step

George W. keeps at it

RICHARD LOWRY

Columbia, S.C.

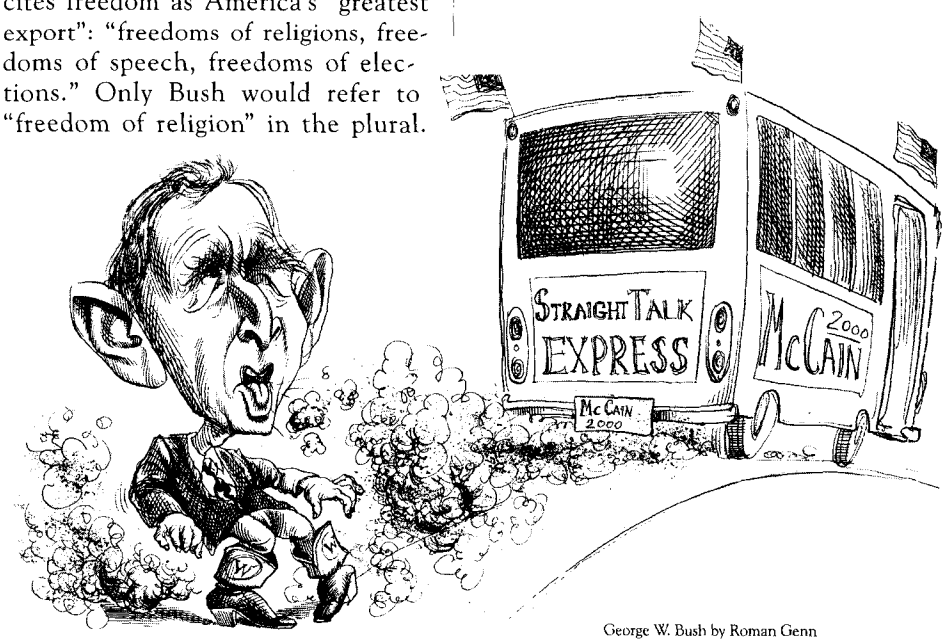
GEORGE W. BUSH is standing at a lone microphone set up in front of his campaign bus, taking questions from a crowd of reporters before a town-hall meeting. Do you have any message for Democratic voters in the state? asks one scribe. W. cocks his head, looking puzzled. "You mean during the *Republican* primary?" In this state, W. risks again getting overwhelmed by a wave of independents and Democrats voting for John McCain, but he seems unfazed. "In the primary, um—not really," he explains. "I'm trying to rally the Republican base, conservative independents. It's hard for me to rally the Democrats to the Republican primary when I refuse to take Democratic positions on tax cuts. I've got the Republican position on the tax cuts." He then relinquishes the mike to press aide Mindy Tucker, calling her—in an *Austin Powers* reference—"Mindy-Me."

From off to the side, W. amuses himself as Tucker talks to reporters, leaning back toward the mike and cupping his ear, pretending to be eager to hear whatever explosive information she is about to reveal. "Mindy-Me" goes on for a couple minutes, when everyone hears a shout. It's W., saying "Excuse me!" and pointing with both arms—as if directing a plane on a runway—toward the county fairgrounds: It's time to move to the main event. So, in a matter of minutes, Bush manages to reinforce several worries about his candidacy: that he can't handle off-the-cuff questions; that his message now simply boils down to "I'm a Republican!"; and that his fun, spontaneous side smacks of arrested adolescence.

Even as Bush's radio and TV attacks begin to bite against McCain, to watch him campaign in South Carolina is to see a more effective candidacy struggling—*really* struggling—to be born. The night before the town-hall meeting, Bush speaks at an event honoring 71-year-old GOP congressman Floyd Spence. The emcee is former governor Carroll Campbell, now a million-dollar lobbyist, who rallies a crowd of 200 Republicans with an admonition not to let Democrats choose the GOP candidate for president. But when Spence takes the stage, he promptly talks about how Democrats helped elect him to Congress 30 years ago. When the candidate himself shows up, the message only gets more muddled. Bush brings with him California representative Duke Cunningham, whom he hails as an ace fighter pilot in Vietnam—serving only to remind people that Bush has no war record of his own. He then proceeds to lionize Spence as "Mr. Chairman"—as if unaware that his campaign is using "chairman" as a term of abuse for McCain.

At the end of his brief talk, Bush cites freedom as America's "greatest export": "freedoms of religions, freedoms of speech, freedoms of elections." Only Bush would refer to "freedom of religion" in the plural. But then, he often garbles and makes up words, as when he tells one South Carolina crowd that his education message "will resignate amongst all parents." And he steps on his own applause lines. A standard Bush line, for instance, is the ringing declaration that the rest of the world "can be the peacekeepers; America will be the peacemakers!" But he will say almost in the same breath that he wants to "keep the peace." So, which is it? Bush is also prone to statements that are utterly unidiomatic for anyone knowledgeable about politics. Only W. talks about "cutting *the* taxes." Only Bush refers to campaign-finance reform as "campaign-*funding* reform." Every time the governor looses one of these phrases, it's a signal to the ear that he doesn't quite know what he's talking about.

Which is a shame, because the new-and-improved Bush campaign has unleashed the hidden policy wonk in George W. Many of his answers to questions on the stump are substantive and involved. At a town-hall meeting in Orangeburg, Bush gets a question on health care, to which he spins out a sensible five-minute response without resorting to any of the demagogic banalities that McCain has made his staple. And on taxes, he now has a rap smoother than Steve Forbes's, but just as principled. He argues first principles: "It's not the government's money—it's your money!" He calls the



George W. Bush by Roman Genn

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surplus "by definition" money beyond the needs of government. He says a chunk of it should go back to people, as a matter of both economics (it will stimulate growth) and justice (the people earned it in the first place).

Leaving money in Washington, Bush warns, "will expand the reach and scope of the federal government." This is wrong, he says, because states and localities—and ultimately individuals—ought to be trusted with more power. But, though he makes this argument about taxes, he fails to unite it with his other proposals, most of which—from school vouchers to tort reform—involve empowering people at the expense of ineffective, grasping government and liberal special interests. Before New Hampshire, he trotted out "compassionate conservatism" as his campaign's sole rationale; he would have done well to make it only an aspect of this broader program of conservative reform.

As for Bush's latest slogan—"a reformer with results"—it is at best a hamhanded way of trying to say that John McCain has misdiagnosed what needs to be reformed and unseated in Washington. It's not the campaign-finance system and "Big Money," but the federal government and the political class. Bush tiptoes up to making the case that McCain's crusade is only a sideshow, a distraction from real reform. He points out that he didn't whine about "special interests" when he fought for and passed HMO reform in Texas. And, in Orangeburg, he finally makes a principled argument against McCain's campaign-finance reform: "We can't have a campaign-funding reform law that prohibits individuals from participating in the system. Guess what will happen otherwise? My friends in the media will get to decide who the candidates are for president, and I'm not interested in them making the decision. I want the people to decide!" This a hint of the populism Bush could turn against McCain—if his campaign were shrewder and more focused.

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The problem for Bush is that 'reformer with results' smacks of his earlier empty slogans.

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The problem for Bush is that "reformer with results" smacks of his earlier empty slogans. It is a revamped version of the same old argument that, as chief executive of a state, he's better suited than McCain to be president. Even with his sharper arguments on taxes and other issues, his rhetoric is a mishmash, with tacked-on bows to McCain (a campaign-finance proposal of his own, insistence on higher military pay, etc.) and the familiar riffs on compassion and the vacuous talk about his own leadership. Bush constantly says that people will elect him if they conclude "we know he's a decision-maker" and "knows how to delegate." Not exactly stirring. His innovation on the stump is that he now delivers these lines without a podium. In Orangeburg, he stands alone with a mike in front of a 50-foot-high American flag, wearing a gray suit with the jacket buttoned. As he bends at the hips making his points, holding the mike with both hands, he looks a little like Talking Heads singer David Byrne, who used to jerk back and forth on stage in oversized suits.

And will Bush ever learn to handle awkward situations more smoothly? When someone asks him whether he would issue a certain executive order, W. doesn't dodge the question cleanly, but stumbles around, conceding, "I don't understand the range and scope of executive orders." Later, when he mentions that he flew jets for the Texas National Guard, then went on to become commander in chief of the guard, he snickers and remarks "only in America"—as if his getting elected governor were a piece of American bizarro on a par with the Ginzu knife and Monica Lewinsky's contract with Jenny Craig.

Despite all this, there remains something charming about George W., and audiences react to it. Bush tells a group of friendly evangelicals in Columbia that, when it comes to appealing to minorities, a crucial question will be, "Is my heart right?" Alas, Bush's heart is not the problem. **NR**

■ CAMPAIGN 2000 II ■

Advice from a Pro

Listen, candidates, if you dare

ROB LONG

A FEW years ago, a Republican presidential candidate called me on the phone. He was appearing the next night on a late-night talk show and needed some help. "Can you tell me what to say? Something funny?" he asked. "Some humorous patter or something?"

"You want me to give you some jokes to tell?" I asked.

"Yeah," he said, "jokes, or just some funny amusing 'takes' on whatever."

"Okay," I said, "here's a funny one: A priest and a rabbi are walking down the street, and they pass a 12-year-old boy. The priest turns to the rabbi and says—"

"Wait a minute," the candidate interrupted. "I can't tell that one."

"You can't?" I asked.

"I can't," he said.

"Are you sure?" I asked again. "I mean, it's a pretty funny joke. See, when the boy passes by, the priest turns to the rabbi and says, 'I'd like to—'"

"I really don't want to hear it. Don't you have any funny patter that you can give me about the events of the day? About the impeachment, or something?"

He had a right to be confused. The day before, during a lengthy call with one of his advisers, I had indeed promised to furnish the candidate with some material. I did this for two reasons: one, because I thought it would be cool to talk to the candidate; and two, because I have some important advice for all presidential candidates, and this was my first opportunity to give it.

But the advice I have to give isn't the advice a candidate wants to hear. He wants jokes. He wants a "There you go again" and a "Where's the beef?" He wants, in other words, a script. And my advice is, essentially, forget the script.

Mr. Long is an NR contributing editor.

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Ronald Reagan, the Tiger Woods of politicians, made it look so easy. Just stand up there and cock your head to one side, talk about tax cuts, talk about America, smile, wave, and get elected. Just put the little white ball on the toothpick-looking thing, take one of those big sticks out of the bag, and knock the ball 350 yards down the fairway.

Ask any professional golfer what he thinks about when he swings his club, and he'll say: "Nothin'." Ask any professional politician what he thinks about when he answers a question or makes a speech, and he'll say: Don't point with a finger, slash with an open hand; don't look angry; smile, but not too falsely; use the person's name; stay on message—unless the question is off message, in which case bring it around to the message; remember the message; leave some wiggle room; depending on the audience, use your Spanish; depending on the audience, use a sports metaphor; depending on the audience, mention your wife; depending on the audience, mention abortion; stay on message; search for a sound bite; end with a smile; end with a steely gaze; what's the message again?

And that's why watching a political debate is like drinking ten cups of coffee right before a long airplane flight. You're bored, of course, but also strangely jittery.

Candidates seem to have learned exactly the wrong lessons from Reagan. He had issues that he cared about, but he rarely recited them with the robotic—and off-putting—laundry list of percentages and figures that, say, a George W. Bush does. The few times that Reagan did get caught up in numbers and amounts, as in the disastrous first debate with Walter Mondale, he looked genuinely uncomfortable and swallowed awkwardly, gulping for air, as if the entire experience were foreign to him. "Let Reagan be Reagan!" was the cry thereafter—to the tune of an historic landslide.

What Reagan knew intuitively, most candidates must learn the hard way. A campaign is a long conversation the candidate has with the voters, and a candidate can weather and overcome almost any misstep or gaffe, as he long as he does it with grace, good humor, and common sense. Every moment of a campaign isn't important; every appearance on *Meet the Press* or *This Week* doesn't carry the weight of the entire enterprise on its shoulders. And, ironically, the candidates who don't get this—who "stay on message" and hew close to the morning line—end up looking uncomfortable and somehow dishonest. Bob Dole, inarguably a man of great personal courage, ended up looking frightened and cowardly facing Katie Couric (of all people!) on the *Today* show. He was convinced, because Ronald Reagan's success taught him so, that television is God, and an angry one at that.

Television is God, of course, but it's a forgiving, groovy, *Jesus Christ Superstar* kind of God. The trick to television is to appear as real as possible, as spontaneous as you can, which is why Bill Clinton's dishonesty seems, well, more honest than Al Gore's dishonesty. Clinton knows that the great thing about our political culture is that the conversation never stops—the stakes are never so high that you have to say something absurd, like, "I invented the Internet."

The only real benefit to being a presidential candidate is that you're awarded instant amateur-celebrity status, sort of like playing in a Pro-Am event. Nobody expects you to be very good—to sing well, to tell a joke with the right sense of timing, or even to be very comfortable on the set with Jay or Dave. What they expect you to be is real. And everyone, with the possible exception of Al Gore, can manage that.

"So what do you think?" I asked, as I wrapped it up with the candidate. "I have to tell you that I've been in the television and media business for a long time, and I've been active in conservative politics for almost as long, and I'm convinced that this is a winning media strategy."

Reagan, the pro of pros, made it look so easy. But candidates have learned the wrong lessons from him.

There was a silence on the phone.

"So, no jokes?" the candidate asked.

"Sir," I said, "they pay the host of that show fourteen million dollars a year to be funny, to keep the show moving, and to guide the conversation. Let him do it. You just sit there and be yourself."

"But what if he asks something embarrassing? Shouldn't I have a zinger ready?"

"A what?" I asked.

"A zinger. It's a show-business term. It means—"

"I know what a 'zinger' is, sir. Look, if he says something that embarrasses you, say, 'Boy, that's embarrassing.' My advice is to sit there, try to have a good time, and do your best to act like a human being."

"Act like a human being," he repeated dubiously. "Okay," he sighed. "I guess I'll try it."

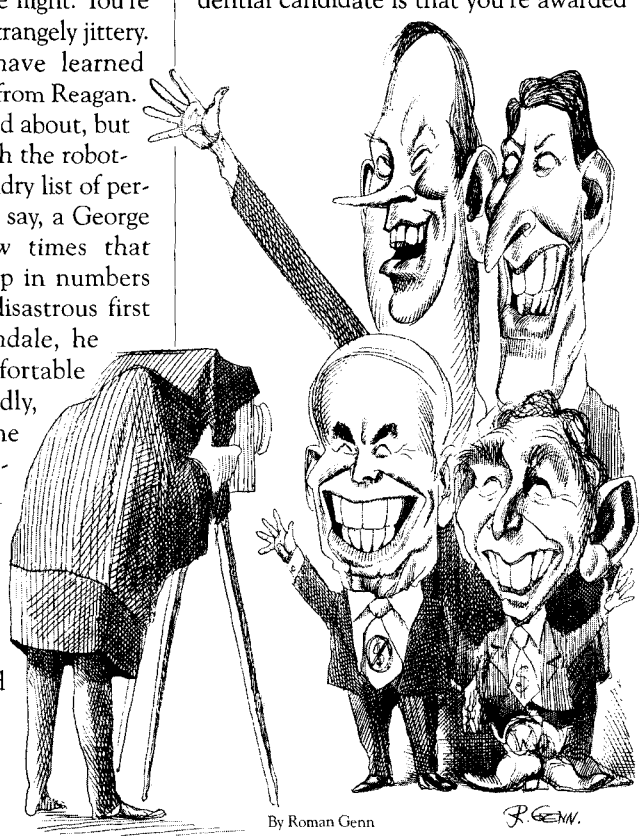
Just before he hung up, he asked a final question. "What's the rest of that joke?"

I told him. He didn't laugh.

"You know, sir," I said, "political correctness and ethnic sensitivities aside, that's a pretty funny joke. A human being would have laughed."

"Yeah, well, a human being doesn't have to run in New York State."

True enough. **NR**



By Roman Genn

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■ THE NATION ■

Against the Grain

Enviro-terrorists target farms

JOHN J. MILLER

On New Year's Eve, Catherine Ives spotted fire trucks and police cars streaking toward the central campus of Michigan State University. As she and her husband got closer to the hubbub, she said, "That looks like where we work." The couple had been planning to visit some friends, but they headed instead to MSU's agriculture building. "Is that smoke?" asked Ives. Indeed it was. Her office was in flames. She would spend the rest of the night at home, calling her staff to tell them they had nowhere to report for work on Monday morning.

Three weeks later, in Portland, Ore., Craig Rosebraugh received an anonymous phone call. A member of the Earth Liberation Front was on the line, taking credit for the blaze, which school officials now say did more than $1 million worth of damage. The saboteurs asked Rosebraugh to publicize a statement for them, as he had done several times before: "ELF struck back at one of the many threats to the natural world," namely, "research concerning genetically engineered sweet potatoes, corn, and other crop vegetables."

For his part, Rosebraugh defends the arsonists' action, declaring: "It's clear that the laws of this country are not protecting the environment. I support the individuals who are doing what it takes to stop corporate exploitation." But isn't this terrorism? "Truthfully, the only terror involved is from organizations that profit from terrorizing the earth. If a little terror puts them out of business, then so be it."

The MSU incident wasn't the first time radical greens had engaged in deliberate property destruction; it was merely the latest in a string of attacks aimed at genetics researchers around the country. Since July, underground groups with names like Future Farmers and Reclaim the Seeds have lashed out almost weekly, destroying crop fields from Maine to California. On September 13, in Mankato, Minn., they uprooted corn plants on a test plot run by Pioneer Hi-Bred, an Iowa-based company, and spray-painted "Free the Seed" on a nearby building. The FBI is currently investigating several such incidents, but so far it has not apprehended any suspects—although, on February 2, agents showed up at Rosebraugh's home early in the morning with a search warrant, and carted away his computer and other belongings.

Eco-terrorism is old hat for fringe environmentalists. Groups such as Earth First! have a long history of monkey-wrenching bulldozers and spiking trees set to be logged. The targeting of genetics researchers at private companies and universities, however, is a new phenomenon. It might also be a sign of things to come. "This is where the animal-rights movement was fifteen years ago," says Jonathan Adler of the Competitive Enterprise Institute. "It's a nuisance on the way to being a big problem."

■

The newest strain of terrorism grows out of the emerging debate over genetics and agriculture.

■

This newest strain of terrorism grows out of the emerging debate over genetics and agriculture, which has raged in Europe for several years and is only now taking root in North America. At a January trade summit in Montreal, the Clinton administration bowed to global pressure and agreed to a treaty that allows countries to close their markets to genetically engineered crops—dubbed "Frankenstein foods" by their detractors—even when there are no data showing the foods to be unsafe. This concession is a major setback for American farmers and the biotech industry. Just two years ago, only 10 percent of the U.S. corn output—much of it destined for export—was genetically altered. Estimates vary, but last year that figure was no less than 30 percent, and may rise again this summer.

Crossbreeding, of course, is an ancient custom. Farmers in search of better crops have experimented with it for thousands of years. The controversy today is over *high-tech* crossbreeding—lab work that removes the DNA from one species, such as a bacterium, and drops it in another, such as corn. The goal is to boost a crop's performance by making it generate a higher yield, decreasing its water use, or improving its resistance to bugs, disease, and sprays.

That's great news for the environment: Increased agricultural production means more food for a growing world population, and less strain on wildlife habitats. What's more, there is no scientific evidence to suggest that genetically modified crops are unhealthy. The Food and Drug Administration must approve all of these products before they can show up in grocery stores.

Which is no consolation to the skeptics. In 1998, Prince Charles energized anti-biotech activists in Europe when he declared that he would never knowingly eat or serve modified food. "I happen to believe that this kind of genetic engineering takes mankind into realms that belong to God and God alone," he pronounced. Last year, American researchers said that pollen from genetically enhanced corn plants poisoned monarch-butterfly caterpillars. Their claims have been heavily criticized, but the damage was done; a wave of media attention fueled opposition to the new technologies. There is growing pressure in Congress for the federal government to require labels on altered food. The market is also starting to respond. On January 27, Frito-Lay said it would stop purchasing modified corn.

This can only encourage those on the environmental fringe who have already been mounting an organized and sophisticated campaign of property destruction against the modified foods. By communicating over the Internet, these groups can exchange information publicly while remaining anonymous. One website devoted to "nighttime gardening" offers a how-to manual on crop destruction. It recommends wearing disposable clothes ("cheaply purchased or easily stolen from Wal-Mart") because "a forensic scientist can tell roughly where you've been from the composition of the dirt and soil that

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40	$ 133	$ 175	$ 203	$ 253	$ 290
45	$ 190	$ 238	$ 283	$ 348	$ 405
50	$ 255	$ 308	$ 388	$ 495	$ 643
55	$ 360	$ 418	$ 585	$ 1,280	$ 2,618
60	$ 503	$ 608	$ 880	$ 5,923	$ 5,923
65	$ 818	$ 983	$ 1,320	$ 7,858	$ 7,858
70	$1,363	$ 1,713	$ 3,820	$10,003	$10,003
75	$2,613	$ 5,158	$14,613	$14,613	$14,613

Male Premiums

Age	10 YEAR	15 YEAR	20 YEAR	25 YEAR	30 YEAR
35	$ 115	$ 143	$ 183	$ 243	$ 290
40	$ 145	$ 193	$ 253	$ 340	$ 365
45	$ 210	$ 305	$ 385	$ 480	$ 575
50	$ 330	$ 495	$ 580	$ 730	$ 1,193
55	$ 500	$ 695	$ 825	$ 1,910	$ 3,333
60	$ 783	$ 1,110	$ 1,265	$ 7,980	$ 7,980
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you will have picked up on your travels." The website also relays news from the front: "One group reported that a long metal pole pushed across one or two rows of corn (dubbed the 'California Corn Cutter') worked well for quick, convenient, and energy-efficient gardening." There's even public-relations advice: Zero in on private companies and universities rather than small farmers, because they are less sympathetic victims.

Sympathy is in the eye of the beholder, of course. Catherine Ives lost academic records, lecture notes, slide presentations, books, and her passport in the MSU fire. "It's like my whole career was burned up," she says. The arsonists claiming responsibility said, via a communiqué sent to Rosebraugh, that they chose Ives as a target because her program, which has spent more than $18 million since its founding in 1991, accepts funding from Monsanto. That's true, says Ives; Monsanto once gave her $2,000 to train African farmers in modern agricultural methods.

At UC-Davis, graduate student Sharon Kessler found her work set back by at least six months after vandals tore down half of her three-acre cornfield. "Stop or be stopped," said a message to Kessler, whose plants weren't even genetically engineered. "I understand their concerns," she says. "But I don't know why they would attack a university. Even if I were conducting transgenic research, it would be to learn whether it's a good thing. We should be allowed to test it out."

Some believe opposition to farm genetics might come to dominate liberal environmentalism; plans are underway, for example, to disrupt the annual biotech-industry convention in Boston this March. But if the past is any guide, the whole dispute could also peter out very quickly. Biotech supporter Greg Caton, president of the vegetarian health-food company Lumen Foods, recalls going on the trade-show circuit in the 1980s: "I remember preparing foods with a microwave and getting castigated by at least a half-dozen people at every show. 'How can you use a microwave? Don't you know you're killing all the nutrients with radiation?'" Today, of course, no kitchen is complete without a microwave oven, and even committed environmentalists know that cooking with one doesn't reduce a food's nutritional value in the least.

But the hard-core anti-tech activists are motivated by revolutionary fervor. As one of their pro-violence websites announces: "These [genetically engineered] plants are held captive as biotech slaves. By harvesting them early, we free them from the bonds of corporate servitude." This is the language of Marxism, projected onto soybeans; more, rather than less, alarming because of its sheer insanity. **NR**

■ **POLITICS** ■

Bushism in One Florida

Gov. Jeb tries to split the middle

CRISTOPHER RAPP

Tallahassee, Fla.

EIGHT hundred people have assembled here, and they are in a foul mood. The event is a public forum on Florida governor Jeb Bush's "One Florida" proposal, which bans race preferences in university admissions and state contracting. The crowd is more than slightly unhappy with the proposal.

For four hours, one person after another comes up to the microphone to bestow on Bush epithets such as "dictator," "white supremacist," and the like. One young man gets a standing ovation when he compares Bush to George Wallace. Another speaker, clad in a black satin jacket bearing the insignia of the farmworkers union, characterizes Bush's attitude this way: "He's saying, 'We don't care about your children . . . [they] are going to stay in poverty to pick the food that the governor eats!'" The crowd cheers. Outside the building, a protester—one of hundreds—brandishes a sign that reads "JEB CROW" (an allusion, of course, to Jim Crow).

Back in November, when Bush first unveiled One Florida, the reception in many quarters was cautious but positive. The *New York Times* called it "a reasoned basis for the coming debate," and liberal columnist Clarence Page described it as a "sane, sensible way out of the nation's most vexing and volatile racial dilemma."

But it didn't take long for the affirmative-action dogmatists to mount a crackdown for orthodoxy. On January 18, state senator Kendrick Meek of Miami and state representative Tony Hill of Jacksonville began a sit-in in the lieutenant governor's office; they remained there for 25 hours—until Bush agreed to hold public hearings around the state on the One Florida proposal.

Subsequently, 2,000 students from Florida A&M University occupied three floors of the capitol building to protest the policy, singing (inevitably) "We Shall Overcome" and (incredibly) "We Are the World." In Miami, an overflow crowd of 4,000 jammed into the Gusman Center for the Performing Arts, and spent seven hours ranting against the plan and its architect.

The prize for hyperbole, however, went to Sharon Russ, a member of the National Organization for Women who spoke at a town-hall meeting in Tampa. After saying that One Florida reminded her of "the days of slavery," she went even further, demanding of the governor, "Get your feet off of my neck! Get your feet off of my neck!"

The irony is that Bush had proposed One Florida precisely in order to avoid this kind of mess. In January 1999, just after he took office, he was approached by Ward Connerly, the University of California regent who had led successful ballot-initiative campaigns that ended race and gender preferences in California and Washington state. Connerly had plans for a similar amendment in Florida, and wanted Bush's support. In their private meeting, Bush declined, explaining that a battle over affirmative action would be "divisive," and jeopardize the goodwill he had built up during his moderate 1998 campaign.

Connerly says he left the meeting "shattered." Later the same day, Bush came out publicly against Connerly's initiative. "He wants a war," Bush told reporters. "I'm a lover."

For a while at least, Bush's strategy seemed to pay off. He enjoyed a remarkably successful first year in office—probably, in fact, the best of any of the heralded Republican governors—highlighted by the passage of his groundbreaking school-choice plan. Then, on November 8, came a *Miami Herald*/*St.*

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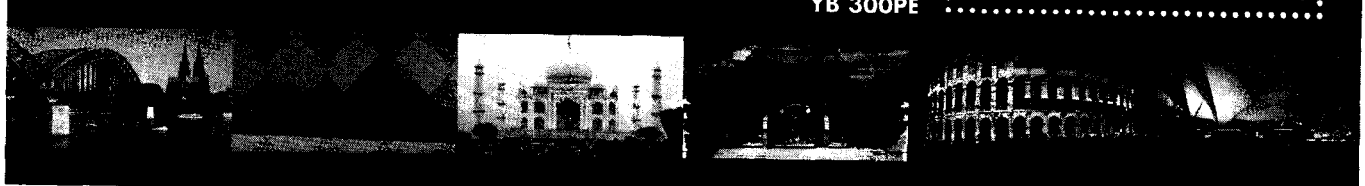

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Petersburg Times poll showing that despite the governor's opposition, the Connerly initiative enjoyed better than 2-to-1 support among likely voters. The following day, in hopes of deflating the initiative's momentum, Bush issued the executive order known as One Florida.

The proposal is strikingly moderate—too much so, in fact, for many conservatives. While universities will no longer be allowed to use race as a criterion for admission, the top 20 percent of each high school's graduating class—the "Talented Twenty"—will receive guaranteed admission to one of the state's ten public universities, regardless of their grade-point average or test scores. In addition, the plan provides for affirmative action based on economics rather than race—colleges will factor in a student's family income, zip code, and whether his parents went to college. Need-based financial aid will be increased by 43 percent, and race-based scholarships will still be allowed. The state also will pay to have every high-school sophomore take the PSAT for free, and to increase the number of advanced-placement courses in low-performing schools. The effect of all of this, according to a study commissioned by the state Board of Regents, is likely to be an increase in minority admissions.

■

Even as the tide turns against affirmative action, its power as a liberal rallying cry remains undiminished.

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Similarly, the state-contracting component of the plan combines a ban on racial set-asides with provisions of which even the *New York Times* would approve. The state's procurement officers will now be directly accountable to the governor's office, hired or fired according to their ability to "internalize our commitment to diversity." Race-neutral efforts to help businesses in poor areas are coupled with special financial assistance for minority firms.

There are, clearly, serious problems with this proposal: The Talented Twenty provision might well lower the quality of the state's public universities, and the contracting portion has the potential to become just another form of quotas.

On the political level, the virulence of the public opposition shows that Bush's attempt to curry favor with moderates by backing away from color-blind principle has backfired. But, despite the brouhaha, the prospects for One Florida's implementation remain good. All 14 members of the Board of Regents—including two who initially opposed it, and all eight appointed by Bush's Democratic predecessor, the late Gov. Lawton Chiles—have pledged to approve the education provisions of the plan. The Republican-led legislature will likely approve funding later this spring.

As for Ward Connerly's initiative, it might never see the light of day. The Florida supreme court, notoriously activist, is currently reviewing four different versions of the ballot language, and could find each of them in violation of Florida's "one-issue" rule for ballot initiatives. Even if the court approves the language of one of the versions, there's a good chance the ruling will come too late for the campaign to collect the 400,000 signatures necessary to qualify for the November ballot.

In the meantime, Florida's civil-rights establishment will continue to make things ugly for Bush. A massive protest is scheduled for March 7, the day Bush delivers his State of the State address, and one week before Florida's presidential primary. Luminaries expected to attend include Patricia Ireland of NOW, the NAACP's Kweisi Mfume, John Sweeney of the AFL-CIO, and the ubiquitous Jesse Jackson.

Bush surely deserves credit for being one of the few public figures willing to challenge race preferences. But while the dust-up over One Florida has been generally unedifying, it has served to demonstrate an important political fact: Even as the political and constitutional tide turns against affirmative action, its power as a liberal rallying cry remains undiminished. As a result, no deed—no matter how well intentioned—that threatens the status quo goes unpunished. In trying to appease the civil-rights lobby, Bush courted compromise where there was none to be had—and so now endures the unhappy fate described in Joseph Epstein's memorable phrase, "in for a penny, in for a pounding." **NR**

■ **EUROPE** ■

Heil, Haider?

The EU finds a whipping boy

DAVID PRYCE-JONES

A MAN named Joerg Haider is at the center of a storm reverberating throughout Europe, an artificial storm, but dangerous all the same. He is from Austria, a country that rarely rates headlines. But who is Haider, what is he?

An unsavory piece of work, to be sure. Born in 1950, the son of minor but enthusiastic Nazi officials, he grew up in the atmosphere peculiar to postwar Austria, in which people steadfastly avoided coming to terms with the country's recent devotion to Adolf Hitler, its favorite prewar son. In a tacit conspiracy, the ruling elites in the conservative People's party and the Social Democratic party—known respectively as the Blacks and the Reds—pretended that Austria had been an innocent victim of Nazism, with nothing to atone for. The truth, of course, was that Austrians had contributed more than their fair share to the Nazi cause. Nearly fifty years were to pass before a government accepted the obligation to apologize and make restitution, by which time few of the victims were still alive to benefit. Rejection of responsibility for Nazism, coupled with at least a measure of unspoken defiance, has generated moral and intellectual evasion in the man on the Austrian street, and Haider particularly speaks for him.

As a politician, Haider rose to become leader of the Freedom party, which has neo-Nazi origins. He seemed sincere when he said that the Waffen SS deserved "honor and respect," that Hitler's employment policies had been "orderly," and that concentration camps had been "punishment camps," implying that the inmates were actually miscreants. He has since retracted all of this loudly and often, but his supporters and his opponents alike sense that such views may indeed express the inner man. For many years, Haider

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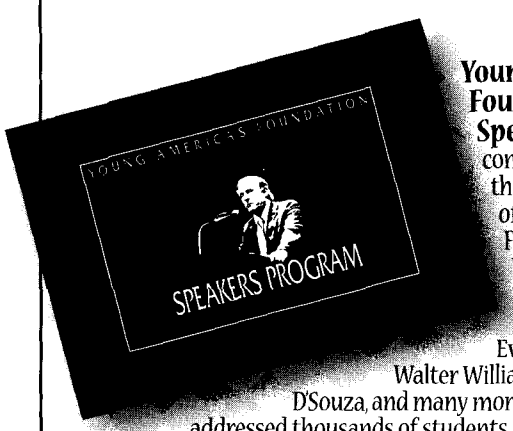

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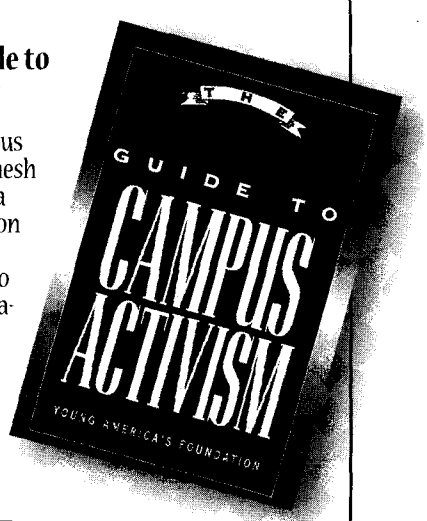

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has advocated a nationalist policy of Austria for the Austrians, especially in controlling would-be immigrants and guest workers.

A stylish dresser, driving a Porsche, skier and sportsman, with a photograph of his friend Arnold Schwarzenegger in his office, he cuts a dashing and even charismatic figure, lord of an estate comprising the whole valley of Bärenthal, in the province of Carinthia. This was the property of a Jewish family until an uncle of Haider's "acquired" it in 1941 through the usual Nazi process of theft. Token compensation was paid after the war. In Austria, war-profiteering of this kind is so normal that nobody seems to hold it against Haider, and he was elected governor of Carinthia.

But politics can be complicated, and one aspect of Haider's popularity is positive rather than creepy. For years, the Blacks and the Reds cozily contrived to govern in coalition. Voters had been unable to throw the rascals out. Between them, the Blacks and Reds put in place a system known as Proport, which divided the spoils of office proportionately between them. The civil service from the highest rank down to village postmasters; museum and opera officials; the media, the bar, schoolteachers and academics; anyone in need of a franchise or a license, down to the level of a taxicab—all were subject to Proport. My turn, your turn. This surreptitious but institutionalized sweetheart dealing corrupted the entire society. Scandal continuously blistered Austrian public life. Needless to say, Blacks and Reds ensured that their own did not end up disgraced or imprisoned.

Haider upset that arrangement. In the general election last fall, his Freedom party received 27 percent of the vote, too small to form a government, but large enough to push its way into a new coalition. After a period of to-ing and fro-ing, the Freedom party and the Blacks agreed to a coalition government, without the Reds. Refusing a post in it, Haider himself remained governor of Carinthia. The election and the coalition-forming conformed in every respect to law and due procedure. Voters had broken the Black-Red cartel; it was their decision; and it might be supposed that nothing more remains to be said.

How very wrong. Austria is one of the 15 members of the European Union, and in a unanimous roar of rage the leaders of the other 14 propose to boycott and ostracize it, in effect repudiating democracy because they dislike its outcome. The several European treaties do not provide even the semblance of a right to adopt such a threatening and authoritarian position. Interference like this is unprecedented in the dealings of democratic states with one another.

■

Complaints about Haider's alleged totalitarian mindset are hardly convincing coming from the French government.

■

Playing with the truth, Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany trumpets, "If we make it clear that we want nothing to do with politicians like Haider, that is not interfering in another country's affairs." Belgium is a country with a Proport of its own, between Flemings and Walloons; it is a world champion in corruption; but its foreign minister now advocates throwing Austria right out of the EU. Even Britain has joined the pack baying for sanctions. The Prince of Wales has been obliged to cancel an engagement to attend a trade fair in Vienna. Non-European Israel withdrew its ambassador, although the veteran Viennese anti-Nazi Simon Wiesenthal has affirmed that Haider is a radical, not a neo-Nazi, and has never expressed any anti-Semitic opinion. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright conceded with comic graciousness that Austrians had the right to choose their own government, but advised them not to do so. The American ambassador to Vienna has been recalled.

Television channels throughout Europe have been spin-doctoring for their governments by running clips of 1938 newsreel, showing Hitler and the Wehrmacht triumphantly entering Vienna. Newspaper reports and cartoons by the hundred also try to establish equivalence between Hitler and Haider. To compare the two is an insult to history, but it serves to illustrate the manipulation of mass emotion by the unscrupulous that George Orwell immortalized as the Two Minute Hate. A sarcastic joke is doing the rounds in Vienna: "When is NATO going to begin bombing our coffeehouses?"

Haider has indeed struck a nerve with the issue of immigration, but this is a troubling matter for the entire continent, not just Austria. Immigrants from all over the world are seeking legal and illegal entry everywhere in Europe. The result is tension and discrimination, race riots and murders here and there, and a hardening of public opinion to which all the European governments have responded. A variety of quotas and controls, subtle and not so subtle, are in place. Britain, to give an extreme example, seems set to require visitors from India and Pakistan to deposit £10,000 per person as a surety that they will leave. European countries together busily deport every year hundreds of thousands of unwanted immigrants, most of them from the Middle East and Africa. The human cost is immense and the dilemma seemingly insoluble, but to single out Austria for racism and xenophobia is outright hypocrisy.

Nor are complaints about Haider's alleged totalitarian mindset convincing when they come from the French government, which contains ministers proud to call themselves orthodox Communists, or from the Italian government, whose prime minister, Massimo D'Alema, remained a Com-

Portrait time for Joerg Haider, by Roman Genn

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munist and a Soviet supporter until 1991, and to this day boasts of it. The previous Berlusconi government contained no fewer than five neo-Fascist ministers. Rifondazione, the successor to the Italian Communist party, and the Party of Democratic Socialism, the successor to the German Communist party, occupy seats in their respective parliaments, but nobody proposes boycott and ostracism on account of these openly anti-democratic elements. In the case of Ulster, Prime Minister Tony Blair has strained to install in government IRA terrorists for whom fascist is the most fitting description.

The Socialist International, the elite Left that rules Europe, appears to have gone berserk, but there is a logic to its behavior. The European Union now taking shape is evidently a centralized and corporatist project of the type that defines socialism. Stealthy measure by stealthy measure, each of the 15 nations involved is surrendering its sovereignty and historic identity to a supranational entity. The project is driven from above. European leaders, of course, know that if the masses were ever allowed to give their opinion freely and fairly, they would overwhelmingly reject the political future planned for them.

One day, and perhaps soon, politicians will articulate their peoples' profound aspiration to national sovereignty and identity. The present hysterics of the ruling Euro-Left stem from the fear that Haider is the first such politician. It is a gift to them that he is tainted by association with neo-Nazism. But their focus on this particular (and odious) aspect of his rise is firing the very backlash of nationalism that the EU supposedly exists to extinguish. A recent precedent ought to offer a caution: The Soviet Union also claimed to have eliminated nationalism; instead, it eliminated the Soviet Union.

Revolted by the contempt the EU shows for fair play and democracy, Austrians are rallying to Haider. The Freedom party is fast becoming popular enough to win an election outright. Such a reaction against EU authoritarianism seems destined to spread from one country to the next, ultimately condemning the project to the limbo where the ghost of the USSR wanders. Seeds of division and violence are sprouting. Who knows? They may begin bombing the coffeehouses after all. **NR**

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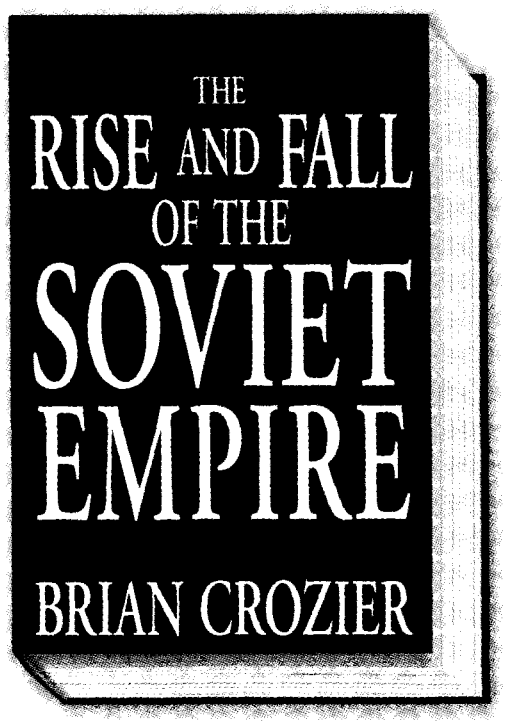

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■ ECONOMICS ■

The Haves and the Have-Lesses

Dealing straight about the income gap

STEPHEN MOORE

SOME people just can't stand prosperity. In January, two of Washington's most liberal think tanks, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute, released their annual joint study in which they proclaim, as usual, that the income gap between rich and poor is widening. The media trumpeted the bleak "findings" to virtually every living room in America.

What they didn't report is that the study was more propaganda than scholarship. It actually distorts what are, in reality, highly encouraging trends in wealth and poverty.

The study's data come from census statistics on income and poverty trends. But a recent Census Bureau report actually contains *good* news about the extent to which the gains from the current expansion are being widely shared across all income groups. The number of poor households is down, from 35.6 million to 34.5 million. The poverty rate is also down, from 13.3 percent to 12.7 percent. Median household income—adjusted for inflation—is up 3.5 percent, to a new all-time high of $38,885. Every income group, even the poorest Americans, saw real gains in income in 1998, and in 1997 as well.

Daniel Weinberg, the principal author of the Census Bureau report, told me that in the ten years he has been working on this subject, "this is the most upbeat income report I've ever seen."

In essence, the income-redistributionists have taken the good news (every income group is doing better) and contorted it into bad news (some groups are doing better than others); but they exaggerate even this. In an economic expansion, of course, wealth gains are never going to be shared in exactly the same measure by all groups. But it turns out that the claim that the disparity between rich and poor is widening is flat-out contradicted by the *recent* data. The standard (though flawed) statistic that social scientists use to measure income inequality is called a "gini coefficient." The larger the coefficient, the greater the income disparities between rich and poor. In 1998, the gini coefficient fell from 0.459 to 0.456. That's a very slight decline, but a decline nonetheless.

Nor are there any other measures indicating growing inequality. Virtually all of the Census Bureau's yardsticks show a small narrowing of the gap between rich and poor in 1998. For example, the share of total income earned by the richest fifth of Americans fell from 49.4 to 49.2 percent. Similarly, the income ratio of the top 5 percent to the poorest 20 percent declined, from 8.22 to 8.20.

These are all, to be sure, very small reductions in inequality. But the important point is that they are reductions. An accurate description of the census findings would have been, "Income Gap Between Rich and Poor Narrows Slightly in 1998."

But, say the class-warriors, the longer-term trend is toward greater inequality. Well, yes—and no. Social scientists agree that in the 1970s and 1980s the income gap between rich and poor widened. This is hardly news. What is news is that in the 1990s the income gap appears to have stopped widening. "Regardless of the measure used," says the census report, "it seems clear that income inequality rose substantially between 1967 and the early 1990s but has remained unchanged since then."

The census report also tells us that some of the apparent widening in income between rich and poor in the 1970s and 1980s is an artifact of a decline in average household size owing to social factors, such as higher divorce rates and more out-of-wedlock births. For example, a family of four with an income of $60,000 becomes—as a result of divorce—two separate households whose average income is $30,000. They appear a lot poorer, even though the total income is the same.

Starting in 1993, the Census Bureau corrected this methodological defect, and found that about one-third of the so-called "income gap" vanished.

The redistributionists' study also fails to mention that low-income households are making gains in real income. Between 1995 and 1998, the inflation-adjusted income level of the average poor family rose by almost $300, from $8,930 to $9,223. If we go back all the way to the start of the Reagan years, we find that the lowest income quintile has seen income gains of $1,100, after inflation, from 1980 to 1998. The popular mantra "The rich get richer and the poor get poorer" is false.

Nor is it true that the middle class is stuck on an income treadmill. Since the current expansion began in the early 1980s, the typical working-class family has seen real income gains of almost $4,000—an improvement of about 10 percent—after inflation. Further, this progress is severely understated, perhaps by as much as half, because almost all economists now agree that official inflation figures over the past 20 years have been vastly *over*stated.

In addition, the black–white income gap has been sharply reduced over the past 15 years, and is now smaller than ever before. In 1990, the average black woman earned about 85 cents for every dollar earned by a white woman. By 1997, that gap had closed to 95 cents on the dollar. For men, the black–white income gap narrowed from 60 cents to 69 cents on the dollar. That's a lot of ground toward equality made up in just eight years.

It's also important to remember that Americans are constantly moving up and down the income ladder. The 35 million Americans who are officially poor today are not likely to be poor five or ten years from now. For example, we now know from census statistics that a household defined as poor in 1980 was, by 1990, more likely to have moved all the way up the income escalator to the category of "rich" than to still be poor.

So why do some scholars exaggerate the income disparities? And why does the press lap up this bunk so eagerly and unskeptically? The obvious answer is that class-warfare headlines help promote the redistributionist political agenda. This agenda is harmful, and based on falsehoods. As long as we're forced to pay attention to these income-gap hoaxes, we'll never be able to focus on the policy initiatives—such as Social Security privatization and school choice—that would really succeed in lifting the economic fortunes of poorer Americans. Falsehood is a costly distraction. **NR**

Mr. Moore is director of fiscal policy studies at the Cato Institute.

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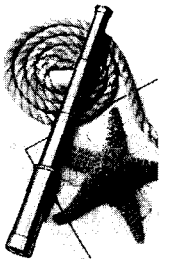

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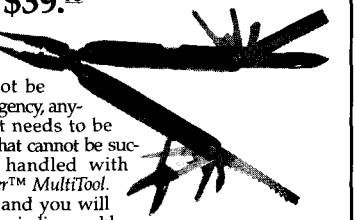

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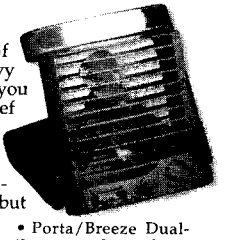

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■ COVER STORY ■

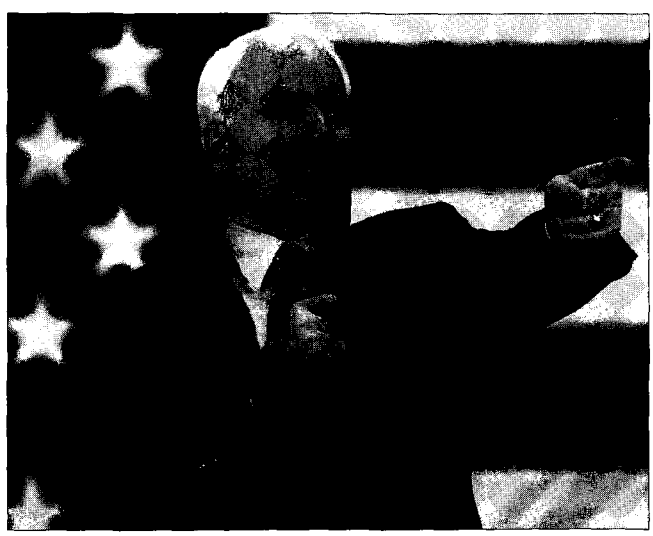
From W.'s Playbook

How McCain is running Bush's campaign

RAMESH PONNURU

If George W. Bush has been showing more irritation and frustration than compassion lately, it may not be just because John McCain whipped him in New Hampshire. Maybe Bush resents the fact that McCain is running Bush's campaign—and running it better than Bush is.

Bush had designed a campaign strategy to adapt to the political world Bill Clinton created. Clinton's legacies were three. First, he defeated conservatism. Conservatives had previously succeeded because liberals seemed bent on offending middle-American sensibilities—pandering to racial militants, coddling criminals, tolerating welfare dependence. Clinton took away those easy targets, and without them conservatives were unable to make the case against his program of government activism.



Clinton's second bequest was the weakest political culture in American history. Public disengagement from politics is not, to be sure, Clinton's doing alone. Its causes are manifold: peace and prosperity; the habitual denigration of politics by conservatives and libertarians; a strain of political paranoia that has infected the popular culture since Watergate. The result is a voting public that often justifies its own laziness with a pseudo-sophisticated cynicism: Why pay any attention to politicians, since they're all liars and thieves anyway? President Clinton's own perfidy so reinforced this impression that it became, perversely, an excuse for him: Everybody does it, so let's just "move on." Clinton lowers the temperature of politics. By raising a thousand and one issues in his State of the Union speeches, he effectively ensures that there are no issues. Except for one "issue": character. Clinton's negative example has increased its importance.

For Bush, the roadmap of post-Clinton politics was clear. Big government was popular, so he wouldn't attack it. Political disagreement was unpopular, so he would be nice and eschew wedge issues. He would run on character, promising to restore dignity to the Oval Office, pledging never to embarrass us.

What is McCain's strategy but a 200-proof version of Bush's? McCain promises not just to refrain from embarrassing us, but actually to make us proud. His campaign is about nothing but character. Any issues he raises are mere illustrations of the theme. The campaign-finance "reforms" he proposes are less important than that he is a reformer. His emphasis on raising military pay is a way of reminding us to give POWs their due. The exit polls from New Hampshire showed that no public-policy issues were decisive, in either party; what moved Republicans to vote for McCain was "moral values," i.e., character.

Bush's "compassionate conservatism" has appeal to a sentimental culture; but our culture is so sentimental that it pretends to yearn for sterner virtues. Voters do not want a leader who will ask them to do something for their country; they want one such as McCain, who will give them a stirring sensation by only seeming to ask them to make great sacrifices.

There's no way Bush can beat McCain on character—not when McCain is a war hero and highlights it 24-7, subtly and directly. Indeed, nobody but McCain could have knocked Bush over in the primaries. Now that he has, Bush can't just take punches at McCain on the issues; first he has to get voters interested in issues. No wonder Bush is having trouble finding his footing.

McCain's campaign is better suited than Bush's to the public mood of 2000 in other respects as well. The boom in individual investment is the dominating fact of American life right now. Soccer moms are keeping an eye on the markets; IPOs are the stuff of twentysomethings' conversations. Bush's tax plan pays no attention to any of this. McCain, on the other hand, offers tax shelters to help people invest for their retirement, education, and health expenses. He hasn't talked much about this part of his tax plan, but at least it's there.

More than anyone else in the race, McCain is using the Internet both as an issue and as a campaign tool. He has raised more than $7 million off it. If the donors who were excited by his New Hampshire blowout had sent those checks through

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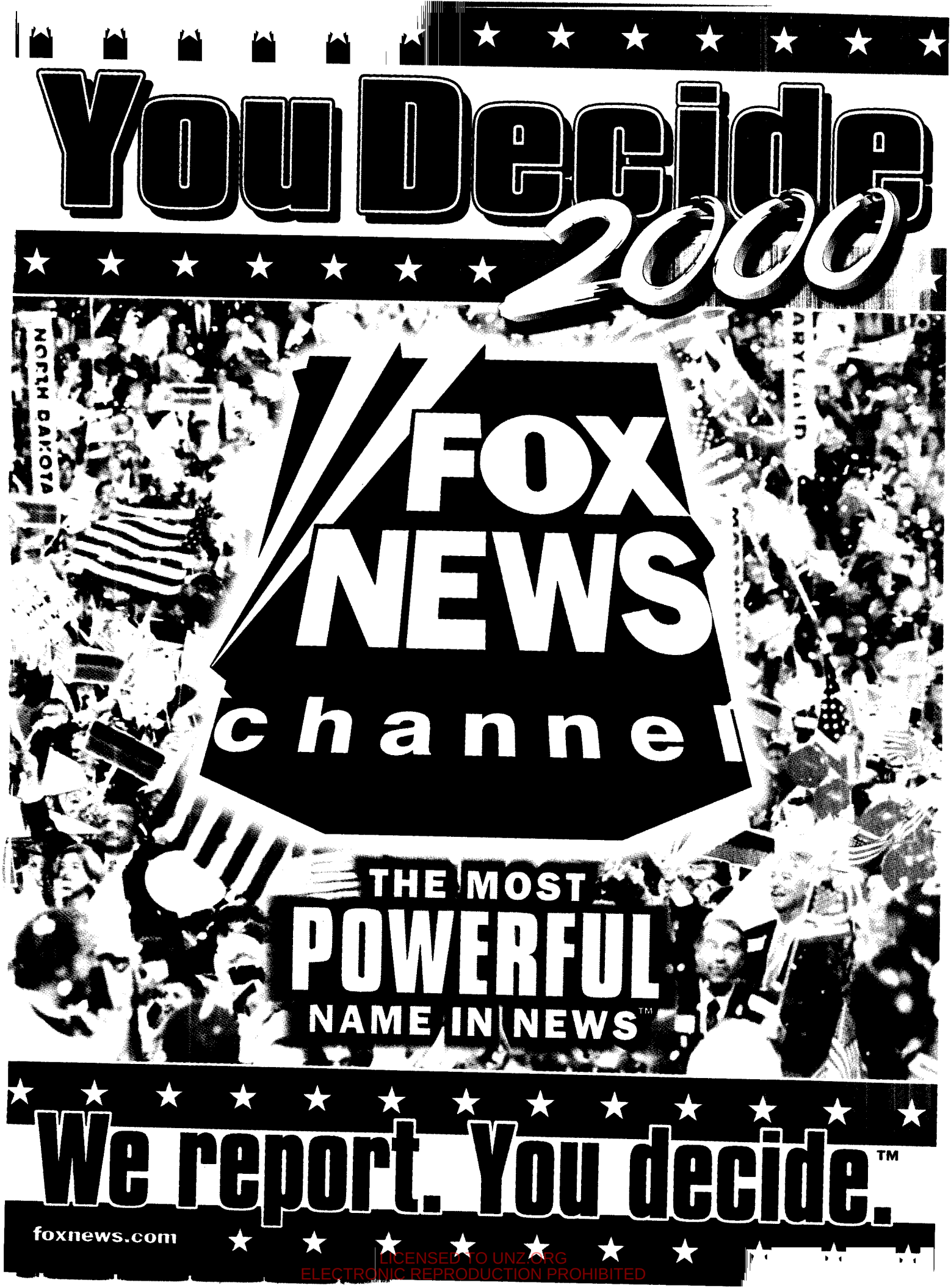

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snail mail, McCain might not have had the money in time to use it to best advantage in South Carolina. McCain's opposition to Internet taxation, meanwhile, puts him squarely on the side of the New Economy. (Oddly, however, McCain's plan to close "corporate tax loopholes" raises taxes on advertising, which can't be good for Internet firms.)

McCain learned about the power of the Internet to fuel an insurgent campaign from Jesse Ventura, who used it to great effect in his winning race for governor of Minnesota in 1998. A month after the election, McCain sent one of his aides to the state to study how he had done it. Obviously, one of the other things McCain learned from Ventura was that independent voters were becoming more active.

George W. Bush may have been running a perfect campaign for the Republican primaries; John McCain would try to ensure that there would be as few of them as possible. In New Hampshire, Bush won among voters who identified themselves as Republican. McCain, however, crushed him among independents—and they made up 41 percent of the total, a record.

When Bush strategist Karl Rove grumbled that Bush would have won if not for all these interlopers, he was widely mocked. But he was right. Most of the primaries are still only for Republicans. But the next round of primaries includes several where independents can vote: South Carolina, Michigan, and Virginia (sort of). It's theoretically possible that the next Republican presidential nominee will have effectively been chosen by non-Republicans.

Presumably, that kind of selection process should yield candidates who are stronger contenders in the general election. (The counterargument is that it would yield candidates who would cause their parties' core voters to defect or stay home in November.) It seems unlikely, however, that weakening the political parties will reinvigorate our politics, which is supposed to be a major promise of the McCain campaign. The theme of self-government looms large in McCain's rhetoric: self-government, and the habits of thought and behavior conducive to it. Yet his political success depends on the erosion of those habits. It's the lack of public engagement that allows McCain to wing it on the issues, or to sidestep them with airy talk of "convene the brightest minds in America" to address the question of the moment (the progressive in McCain beats the constitutionalist every time). There are no second pages to McCain policy proposals.

McCain suggests that people are supporting him because they detest what politics has become, but it's more likely that they just detest politics, period. (One reason they detest it, of course, is that politicians such as McCain keep telling them that everyone involved is corrupt.) He will win to the extent he is able to get people who don't particularly care about politics—and who might just as well vote in the Democratic primaries for Bill Bradley—to back him.

And perhaps McCain should win. If the purpose of a primary is to pick the strongest candidate, one can hardly begrudge him for mastering the politics of 2000 so thoroughly. McCain has made himself more electable by adapting skillfully to some of the unfortunate tendencies in our political culture, and the question for conservatives is whether we can stomach it. Hey—only a few months ago, weren't we asking the same question about George W. Bush? **NR**

From Perot's Playbook

A page from H. Ross, as well

LAWRENCE KUDLOW

A NEW-STYLE campaign—call it "Hurricane McCain"—is ripping through George W. Bush and the office-holding Republican establishment. But close to the eye of this new hurricane is an older idea: the debt-reduction mania of Paul Tsongas and Ross Perot.

Tsongas won the New Hampshire primary in 1992 by declaring that he would put an an end to "pander-bear" fiscal irresponsibility. Perot, with his flip-charts, turned the fiscal-austerity fight into a popular crusade.

Throughout the '90s, GOP operatives spent long, fretful hours figuring out how to deal with Perot. His simple budget-cutting arithmetic threatened the GOP's presidential arithmetic; put simply, a GOP nominee couldn't win if Perot siphoned off millions of votes. This explains Newt Gingrich's obsession with the balanced-budget amendment, and his catastrophic 1995 decision to shut down the government (from which, incidentally, the congressional Republicans never recovered). These ill-advised moves were designed to co-opt the Perot movement; but they actually succeeded in splintering and marginalizing the congressional GOP.

By favoring massive debt reduction over broad-based taxpayer relief, the GOP helped ensure that paying down the debt would become the Holy Grail, along with responsible-sounding but still-nebulous plans to "save" the Social Security and Medicare entitlements.

McCain is hewing closely to the Tsongas-Perot script. "People in New Hampshire are telling me, 'Senator McCain, save Social Security. Put some money into Medicare, and pay down that debt.'" It's not quite as stirring as "Tear down this Wall," but it seems to be working. According to pollster John McLaughlin, McCain voters favor saving Social Security (60 percent) over tax cuts (30 percent)—a two-to-one margin.

Has the McCain campaign decided that neo-Perot budget austerity is the ticket to victory? Campaign co-chairman Warren Rudman says no; I'm not so sure. The former New Hampshire senator now heads the Concord Coalition, a budget-watchdog group that strongly opposes tax cuts; but he says there was never any conscious decision to emulate Perot, merely a decision "to go after the broad middle of the country." Is McCain emulating Tsongas, then? "No, no," Rudman responds. "That was purely John's instinct—

Mr. Kudlow is an NR contributing editor and a columnist for *National Review Online*.

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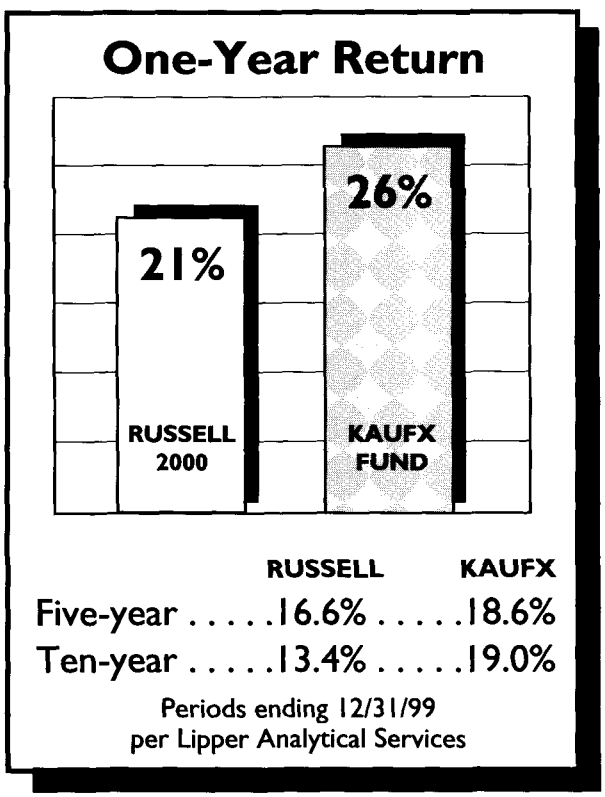
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that honesty, truth-telling, and integrity in government would connect with people."

Rudman himself is a very interesting character. He co-authored the 1985 Gramm-Rudman deficit-reduction plan, which, by threatening to cut entitlements, was a key factor in the GOP's loss of its Senate majority in 1986. A former New Hampshire attorney general, he has already been touted by McCain as a likely U.S. attorney general, though Rudman says that at age 70, he'd rather not: "I've already got a life. I'd prefer to be an outside counselor, sort of an honest Vernon Jordan."

Rudman has had a noticeable influence on McCain's economic views. McCain voted in favor of the landmark Reagan tax cut of 1986; as recently as last year, he voted for an across-the-board tax cut. But this year, he has converted to Clinton orthodoxy and favors debt reduction over tax cuts. On the campaign trail, he appeals to voters who doubt the staying power of the current prosperity and believe that paying down the federal debt is a moral imperative on a par with paying family bills.

The problem is, neither the politics nor the economics of federal deficits and debt reduction have ever added up. On the politics, look at Gerald Ford in 1976, or George Bush in 1992, or Bob Dole in 1996. (True enough, Dole had a 15 percent tax-cut plan. But voters were familiar with his past record of tax increases, and skeptical grass-roots conservatives stayed home.)

The problem for McCain is, neither the politics nor the economics of deficits and debt reduction have ever added up.

Even more importantly, the economics are faulty. If federal debt is so bad, why has the economy been so terrific, for so long? According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, the U.S. has just completed its seventeenth year of uninterrupted prosperity. This historic boom was touched off by Reagan's tax cuts and deregulation, along with the Volcker-Greenspan disinflation, and continues to this day. So what's the rationale?

McCain and others argue that debt reduction will bring down interest rates. But in fact, interest rates fell substantially during the 1980s, even as the debt grew substantially in order to finance the defense buildup and the tax cut. Over time, as growth-induced revenues flowed in, the tax cuts paid for themselves.

The reason interest rates fell—from around 14 percent in 1981 to around 6 percent today—is that inflation, which is the major determinant of interest rates, dropped from 14 percent in 1980 to roughly 2 percent today. Federal debt financed peace and prosperity—but it did not prevent lower inflation, or low interest rates, or record-setting economic growth, or low unemployment.

Also, if McCain were to succeed in eliminating the federal debt, he would undermine Alan Greenspan's ability to conduct monetary policy. Federal Reserve purchases or sales of Treasury debt are the primary tools in expanding or contracting the money supply.

Further, foreign central banks park their excess dollar reserves in interest-bearing Treasury debt. If there were no U.S. debt, then the whole international trade-balance payments mechanism would be upset. Foreigners would be forced to sell dollars and invest instead in euros or Japanese yen. This would undermine the dollar's reserve-currency status at precisely the time when countries around the world are adopting the dollar as their new currency of choice.

Paying down the federal debt would thus threaten the global financial stability that depends on dollarization.

And we would feel the consequences right here at home: A sinking dollar would lead to significant inflation and interest-rate increases that would, together, end economic growth.

Foreign investors, on the other hand, would benefit greatly from the proposed paydown of U.S. debt. Nearly 40 percent of the $3.2 trillion marketable Treasury debt is held by private and official foreign accounts. Treasury buybacks of this debt would send nearly 10 percent of the proceeds to Japan, 8 percent to Britain, about 4 percent to Communist China, and over 2 percent to OPEC. Only 4 percent of the cash would go to Main Street U.S. households; the rest would accrue to pension funds and mutual-fund companies.

Clearly, if the goal is to help family finances, across-the-board tax cuts are a better idea.

Nor will debt reduction prevent more rapid federal spending. Since the emergence of surplus tax revenues two years ago, government spending has shifted into high gear—rising more than 5 percent (twice the inflation rate) during the past year. It had actually been declining, albeit modestly, in the mid '90s.

So why is McCain being an obsessive over debt reduction? He's trying to be an electoral synthesizer, piecing together the biggest Republican tent since the Reagan landslide in 1984. But—unlike Reagan—he seems willing to blur his ideological and philosophical convictions in the process. Instead of attracting voters to his principles, the candidate of character is making a bet on "issueless prosperity."

There are risks in this strategy. Al Gore will be vying for many of the same votes, but his Clintonian spending programs will provide real cash to the American middle class, not just foreign bondholders. If McCain and Gore agree that debt paydowns are more important than tax cuts, the Republican base of grassroots conservatives might stay home, while lower- and middle-income Democrats turn out and vote for government cash goodies.

In the end, McCain's attractive personality could carry the day; stranger things have happened. But color me skeptical. Democracy is about the rule of law, not the rule of even the most personable and valorous men. All the truly successful presidents combined personal optimism with a clear policy agenda. In this sense, John McCain is still a work in progress. **NR**

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His Last Refuge?

McCain as Reform's nominee: a scenario

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

ENTERTAIN the following report from the Associated Press, dated several months from now, August 2000, from the Republican convention in Philadelphia:

In the most disruptive day American politics has seen since the historic 1968 Democratic convention in Chicago, the Republican party was last night thrown into disarray by Sen. John McCain, the popular war hero it had rejected less than forty-eight hours earlier by the narrowest of margins. In a classic act of guerrilla politics that would have won the admiration of his one-time North Vietnamese captors, Mr. McCain threw the usually smooth-running GOP schedule into total confusion, while thousands of miles from Philadelphia.

Ten minutes into the acceptance speech of GOP nominee George W. Bush, all the major television networks simultaneously adopted the device of a split screen—to show the governor in his moment of glory, and two rocking chairs on the stoop of a small wooden shack outside Dallas, Texas. After about three awkward minutes, the door of the shack opened, and out walked Sen. McCain with H. Ross Perot, the Texas billionaire. The two men sat down in the rocking chairs.

While Mr. Bush outlined his "Agenda of Empathy" in Philadelphia, Mr. McCain and Mr. Perot down in Texas exchanged a few preliminary jokes at the governor's expense while watching his performance on a monitor. Indeed, Mr. McCain, who seemed to have advance knowledge of Mr. Bush's remarks, interjected corrections and comments from his rocking chair, at one moment guesstimating the Bush family's likely gains from the governor's proposed "Tax Equity Reform," and at another suggesting that a good description of Mr. Bush's "Rules for U.S. Intervention" would be "Last in, first out."

After ten minutes of this good-natured joshing, Mr. McCain rose and introduced "my good friend, Ross Perot," who had an important announcement to make. Mr. Perot began by saying that he had long wanted Mr. McCain to run for the Reform party's presidential nomination because the Arizona senator shared the party's principles of saving Social Security, paying down the national debt, and effecting campaign-finance reform. But he had reluctantly concluded that Mr. McCain was too loyal a GOP partisan to consider a Reform-party draft.

"The Philadelphia Big Steal changed all that," said Mr. Perot. "John won most primaries, he won most votes, and he arrived at the convention with a narrow but clear majority of the elected delegates. So how come Junior Bush won the nomination? Well, he did it the way he made $15 million out of the Texas Rangers—he got his father's friends to buy it for him."

Mr. Perot's interpretation of the convention is a self-interested one, but there is no doubt that even some of Mr. Bush's supporters were uneasy at the tactics used to secure him the nomination. Almost every delegate who was not firmly committed to Sen. McCain by state law or party rules came under intense pressure from the Republican governors, the national GOP machine, and the House and Senate leadership to declare for Mr. Bush. Delegates elected to support Steve Forbes, Gary Bauer, and Alan Keyes were press-ganged into supporting the Texas governor. Almost without exception, delegates from states with caucuses, nonbinding primaries, or delegations picked by Republican governors went for Gov. Bush over Sen. McCain. And when it looked as if even this combination of strong-arming and patronage—Dennis Hastert had promised so many postmasterships, said one wag, that soon America would have five mail deliveries a day—would not carry the day, the Bush campaign proposed to rewrite the convention rules so that the twenty-one states with open primaries and the eleven states with modified open primaries would have their delegate numbers reduced in proportion to the number of non-Republicans—independents and Democrats—voting in their GOP primaries.

This maneuver was justified with the not unreasonable argument that the GOP nominee should not be chosen by members of the opposing party, but its plain effect was to cut Sen. McCain's delegate total more substantially than Gov. Bush's. Speaking in the floor debate, Mr. McCain offered to endorse the proposal for the 2004 convention, arguing that the rules of the game should be changed before the voters speak, not after. When this concession was rejected by the Bush campaign and (very narrowly) by the delegates, Mr. McCain accepted defeat, withdrew his name from nomination, and led his supporters from the Philadelphia convention hall, singing, "We've Been Thrown Out of Better Joints Than This."

After an emotional speech in which the senator sorrowfully remarked that he now felt the Republic needed to be saved from the Republicans, Mr. McCain left Philadelphia for an unknown destination. His whereabouts had remained a mystery until last night, when he made his surprise appearance alongside Mr. Perot, who promptly exploited the chaos of the GOP convention in his own inimitable style.

"That kind of voodoo politics makes the American people sicker'n a five-year-old boy in an ice-cream factory," said Mr. Perot. "Great political parties belong to the people, not to a few rich wirepullers. Then and there I rang John and offered him my support for the Reform party's nomination."

When Sen. McCain stepped forward to accept, it was plain that a meeting of minds had occurred between the anti-establishment senator and the populist billionaire.

"That giant sucking sound you hear is corporate lobbyists sucking on the national teat," said Sen. McCain. "But those Gucci loafers are made for walking, and when I am elected as the first Reform-party president, they are gonna go walking right out of the nation's capital and into the history books." (A spokesman for Gucci later issued a statement that Gucci loafers were "primarily intended for indoor wear" and that serious walkers would do better to wear Gucci's "Skinhead" line of stout walking boots, at $799 a pair.) The senator then

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outlined his "Rendezvous with Destiny" program, while on the other half of the split screen Mr. Bush was still listing the items of his "Agenda for Empathy."

By this stage Mr. Bush was perhaps the only person in America who was unaware that Sen. McCain was engaged in the biggest scene-stealing operation in political history. His aides had made the understandable decision not to disturb him during his big speech with such unsettling news, but this produced unintentionally comic effects. Not knowing that Sen. McCain had just left the GOP in the most public manner possible, Mr. Bush delivered a long eulogy of the senator's character and achievements, intended to reunite the fractured party. Listening to this praise via his television monitor, Sen. McCain drily responded: "Looks like we've got another crossover to Reform."

Despite the dramatic impact of his announcement, Sen. McCain's capture of the Reform nomination is far from assured. Most delegates to the Reform convention in Long Beach on August 10 have already been chosen. Patrick J. Buchanan, the former Nixon and Reagan aide, is generally thought to have built up a strong organization and body of support. And since the decision earlier this year of Gov. Jesse Ventura and billionaire developer Donald Trump to leave Reform and start the Independence party (which *Saturday Night Live* has effectively renamed the "Swingers Party"), his opponents have been largely-unknown local

Consider this a 'thought experiment,' based on an extrapolation of some long-term trends and a few recent events.

celebrities. That may now change. Mr. McCain is a political star. Ross Perot has the loyalty of many delegates and the party's permanent officials who will now presumably back his new protégé. And mystery surrounds exactly how state Reform parties select their convention delegates, and under what rules.

Still, there is enough uncertainty about the result of any McCain–Buchanan battle for the senator yesterday to have effectively retracted his earlier criticism of Mr. Buchanan. "My usual rule is: Never read a book you mean to criticize," said Mr. McCain yesterday. "Maybe I'll revise that in the future. I've never claimed to be right on everything, and I admit to flying off the handle from time to time. But I certainly don't want to stop any creative thinking about historical might-have-beens. And Pat Buchanan is not only a gentleman, he is also an old friend. So, yes, I can easily imagine him being a senior member of my administration."

Mr. Buchanan could not be contacted for comment. But his sister and campaign chairman, Bay Buchanan, said: "I suppose that the establishment has finally seen the writing on the wall and decided to run its own anti-establishment candidate. John McCain is a fine American, but his campaign-finance reform won't put bread on the table of a single unemployed steelworker in Pennsylvania. Let the debate begin."

OKAY, okay, it's political science fiction, and very unlikely to happen. But consider it not so much a prediction as a "thought experiment" based on an extrapolation of some long-term trends and a few very recent events. For example:

1. For the last twenty years—and more urgently since the end of the Cold War—there has been a disaffected middle in American politics satisfied with neither major party and straining to find its own identity. That is partly because it has two identities. As John Judis argued in *The New Republic* in 1995, there is the "sensible center," which is socially liberal but skeptical of government, and the "radical middle," which is anti-welfare, nationalist, protectionist, anti-immigration, and hostile to national political elites. Potential leaders of the sensible center include Colin Powell, and both Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan have at various times championed the "angry middle." A great political prize awaits whoever is able to unite both groups under a single banner.

2. That is a difficult task but not an impossible one. Both groups share some of the same discontents, such as hostility to the influence of money in politics, even if they differ over free trade. And both groups like McCain not simply because he has promised to reduce political corruption, but because his entire persona is that of an anti-politician. When politics itself is seen as corrupt, "character" is shorthand for anti-political virtue. It also enables Democrats and independents to forget that McCain is a Republican and vote for him. But they would vote for him still more easily if he were not on the GOP ticket.

3. McCain has gradually shed his conservative Republican image and policies in response to the wishes of his "sensible center" supporters. John Anderson underwent a very similar ideological transformation in 1980. Because the sensible center includes many in the national media elite, that elite is able to redefine a candidate in line with its own values unless he positively objects. McCain has not objected.

4. If a candidate goes along with this centrist redefinition, the media tend to forgive or simply ignore any "angry middle" rhetoric he indulges in. Thus, the sensible-centrist former governor Dick Lamm, who ran for the Reform nomination in 1996, was never seriously questioned, let alone attacked, for his advocacy of lower immigration levels. McCain is similarly given a pass on his anti-gay jokes.

5. As NR's Ramesh Ponnuru has pointed out, the expected Buchanan/Ventura battle for the Reform nomination would have pitted the angry middle in a sober suit against the sensible center in wrestler's tights. So Ventura's withdrawal to Trump Tower looks like good news for Buchanan. Maybe not, however, since it frees Perot from any need to back Pat in order to keep out Ventura. And McCain—another inside outsider—is surely more to Perot's taste.

6. Finally, though Pat Buchanan lays out the policies of the "angry middle" better than anyone else, John McCain need not lay out policies at all to win their votes. All he need do is: Be himself and regularly identify himself as a reformer. As the great Roscoe Conkling once said: "When Dr. Johnson remarked that patriotism was the last refuge of a scoundrel, he was unaware of the then unexploited possibilities of the word 'reform.'" **NR**

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In Castro's Corner

A story of black and red

JAY NORDLINGER

EVEN as Castro's rule lingers on in Cuba, so does the romance of the American Left with that rule. It has been rekindled by the case of Elián Gonzalez, the plucky survivor of a tragic crossing who is now at the center of a custody battle with Cold War overtones. Among Castro's most ardent admirers, right from the beginning, forty years ago, have been black political elites. He has always stroked them; they have always stroked back. It is perhaps the least surprising aspect of the present controversy that they are playing a prominent role in it.

In January, Rep. Maxine Waters led another of her delegations to Havana, to attend a "U.S. Healthcare Exhibition." While there, she and Rep. Barbara Lee met with Elián's father, who, Waters later said, "has a wonderful reputation." She also expressed confidence that she had "heard firsthand how the people of Cuba feel about the case." Lee, for her part, made the following statement: "As a trained social worker, I can unequivocally say that Elián's father is totally fit and equipped to raise his son in a loving environment."

When the boy's grandmothers traveled to the U.S.—resulting in a spectacle that was less Grandma than *Granma*—it was Waters who hosted them on Capitol Hill. She said to the grandmothers, "If you do not fight for Elián, they win. You fight, and you win." The Cuban ladies then went to Florida, to be reunited with Elián at the home of Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin, an educator and longtime friend of attorney general Janet Reno. After the visit, O'Laughlin announced that she had come to believe that the boy should not be returned to Cuba. She cited, among other factors, an "atmosphere of fear" created by the grandmothers' KGB-style minder. Maxine Waters was not pleased. "I am bewildered," she said. "Never in my wildest imagination would I think that a nun who was supposed to be a neutral party would undermine that neutrality."

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee—no relation to Barbara Lee—is another congresswoman in the Waters mold, and she, too, has been all over the case, making TV appearance after TV appearance to urge Elián's return to Cuba, and to cast aspersions on the motives of those who hold another view. On one program, she was asked, gently, why the boy's father did not come to the U.S., to speak freely and reclaim his son. The father, she answered, had a newborn child at home and, besides, was afraid that "he would be entangled in legal procedures and proceedings" in the United States. He was "fearful of not being able to return, and not being able to return with Elián"—no more than that.

And, if the subject is Cuba, never far away is Rep. Charles Rangel—good ol' "Chollie": so affable, so quippy, so beloved by the Washington media. And so stubborn in his fondness for the dictator in Cuba. One of the lowest moments in his career occurred in 1995, when he greeted Castro in Harlem with a bear hug. In January, after Republicans proposed legislation that would make Elián a "permanent resident" of the U.S., Rangel was quick to introduce a "sense of the Congress" resolution that Elián should be returned. He is unsparing in his criticism of anyone with reservations about sending the boy back. Why should he stay here, Rangel asks, just because "we have some Cuban-American congressmen from Miami who are up for reelection"? Of any other argument, he evinces no understanding: "It is hard for me to see how people can hate Communist Cubans so much that they will hold this kid hostage."

Needless to say, it is not only black congressmen who take this sort of line. Sen. Christopher Dodd, for example, attributes any hesitation about returning Elián to Cuba to "hatred of an old man." The black Left is merely a subset of a national Left that is, to varying degrees, Castro-mad. But black leaders defend Castro, and pummel his opponents, with particular ardor, hard not to notice. They often plead his case in the major media; he, in turn, enjoys glowing treatment in the black-oriented press. To Havana, there is a steady parade of black visitors: politicians, activists, musicians, writers, actors. Usually they are wined and dined by the dictator himself. He listens to their grievances and theories. He shows them his capital's Martin Luther King Jr. Center. He proclaims, to their delight, that Cuba is a "Latin-African country" (although, to be sure, he does not talk this way to Cubans themselves). And he uses them as a kind of club against his democratic critics, in the time-honored Communist tradition of, "What about the Negroes in the South?" Knowing that blacks are the moral arbiters of American society, Castro has worked hard to woo them—and they are good and wooed.

■

Black elites admire Castro for an assortment of reasons. Above all, though, they believe that the dictator has been a boon to black Cubans.

■

It all began in 1960, during Castro's triumphal visit to New York City. He decamped from a plush Midtown hotel to the Hotel Theresa up in Harlem. Roger Wilkins, the civil-rights veteran, remembers the "dramatic impact" that gesture made: "I don't think there was a politically alive black person who wasn't aware of what Castro had done." The critic Shelby Steele notes that many black Americans saw the Cuban revolution as a "liberation struggle, with the masses and the dark people rising up." Castro has always been "very savvy about playing that theme with American blacks, and it has given him a little wedge into American life. There has been this flirtation back and forth." Also, says Steele, black politicians, by associating with Castro, are able to present to their constituencies "the look of internationalism, the feeling of being part of something much larger than American racial protest. Blackness automatically makes you a member of a large, worldwide oppressed proletarian class. That is attractive in [for example] South Central Los Angeles, where Maxine Waters holds forth."

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General McCaffrey: Given your recent blunders, it is time to resign!

Your failed leadership has . . .

- *Undermined the First Amendment:* By paying networks to produce shows with drug war messages, reviewing scripts in advance to ensure they were consistent with your ideology, you have put the drug war ahead of free speech.
- *Entangled us in Foreign Wars:* In a futile effort to control the drug supply, you have involved the US in the four decade old Colombian civil war. Your policies will cost American lives.
- *Misled the American Public:* Throughout your tenure in office, you continue to misstate the facts on key drug policy issues including the number of lives lost to drugs, the science on needle exchange and medical marijuana, the success of progressive, foreign models of drug control and the cost of drug abuse.
- *Cost Thousands of American Lives:* You blocked the funding of needle exchange programs even though the Department of Health and Human Services has found that needle exchange prevents the spread of HIV and does not increase drug use. You have put the health of all Americans at risk.
- *Undermined Democracy:* You have worked to undermine the votes in seven states and the District of Columbia on medical marijuana. You forgot that democracy comes before drug war.
- *Misdirected drug control resources:* You're wasting resources on preventing benign hemp seed and hemp material from entering the US.

A civil society cannot permit government officials to subvert the media, undermine democracy and endanger its citizenry. You have lost sight of basic American values. It is time to move on.

Common Sense for Drug Policy, Kevin B. Zeese, President
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In 1995, Castro made a smash return to Harlem, basking in the adulation of black New Yorkers, and receiving that embrace from Charlie Rangel. He spoke at a Baptist church, where the throng screamed "Fidel! Fidel! Fidel!" and "Viva Cuba!" Said Castro to his flock, "As a revolutionary, I knew I would be welcome in this neighborhood." He used the occasion to denounce conservative attempts to scale back affirmative action—not that he himself would ever practice any.

The dictator was even cooler, more glamorous, of course, in 1974, when Radical Chic still hung heavy in the air. That was the year that Huey Newton, the killer and Panther, electrified his admirers by fleeing to Castro's island. Before long, Cuba became a sort of "Underground Railroad" for the black Left, as Peter Collier, chronicler of the era, puts it—an asylum from white oppression, and from U.S. law.

The most celebrated of Castro's current protectees is Assata Shakur. She is almost on a level with her fellow cop-killer Mumia Abu-Jamal as a darling of black radicals. In 1973, when she was Joanne Chesimard, she murdered a policeman in New Jersey, and was sentenced to life. In 1979, however, she escaped. ("I was like Houdini," she told *Essence* magazine a few years ago. "I plotted day and night.") She ran down to Cuba, where she is now a smirking rebuke to *yanqui* justice. In that *Essence* interview, she provided a flavor of her life in exile: "I'm invited to give lots of presentations to people who come here. I talk about human-rights violations and political prisoners in the United States." When her American supporters visit her, "I ask how things are in the States," and "they don't give me the okey-doke: They say, 'Honey, things are hard.' It reminds me I have to keep struggling."

In 1998, Shakur was the subject of an amazing note that Maxine Waters sent to Castro—a note of apology and explanation. The congresswoman had mistakenly voted for a measure calling for the extradition of "Joanne Chesimard," unaware that the woman was the beloved Shakur. The "Republican leadership," Waters wrote to Castro, had been guilty of "deceptive intent" in using the outmoded name. Hence, her error. She went on to explain that the Sixties and Seventies had been "a sad and shameful chapter of our history," when "vicious and reprehensible acts were taken against" black revolutionaries, resulting in their need to "flee political persecution."

This letter—to a dictator, noxious with complaints about the other political party, defensive of a murderer—is possibly unique in congressional history.

The prototype of the Castroite congressman was, of course, Ron Dellums, of Oakland, California. His seat is now held by Barbara Lee, who for many years served the old lion as his top aide. She gained a bit of notoriety in 1983, when the U.S. invaded Grenada. Shortly before, Dellums had taken a "fact-finding" trip to the island, whose purpose was to persuade Congress that the air base there was meant for entirely benign uses. The invading Americans seized many official documents, among them the minutes of a highly unusual meeting of the Grenadian Politburo. They read: "Barbara Lee is here presently and has brought with her a report on the international airport done by Ron Dellums. They have requested that we look at the document and suggest any changes we deem necessary. They will be willing to make changes." Unfortunately for Lee, Dellums, and the fiction they perpetrated, the invaders also uncovered the diary of the former Grenadian defense minister. An entry in it reads: "The Revo[lution] has been able to crush counter-revolution internationally. Airport will be used for Cuban and Soviet military."

A second Dellums aide, Carlottia Scott, had written several notorious notes to the Grenadian strongman, Maurice Bishop, the most infamous of them being the most telling: "Ron [Dellums], as a political thinker, is the best around, and Fidel will verify that in no uncertain terms. . . . Ron had a long talk with Barb and me when we got to Havana and cried when he realized that we had been shouldering Grenada alone all this time. Like I said, he's really hooked on you and Grenada and doesn't want anything to happen to building the Revo and making it strong. He really admires you as a person, and even more so as a leader with courage and foresight, principle and integrity. Believe me, he doesn't make that kind of statement often about anyone. The only other person that I know of that he expresses such admiration for is Fidel."

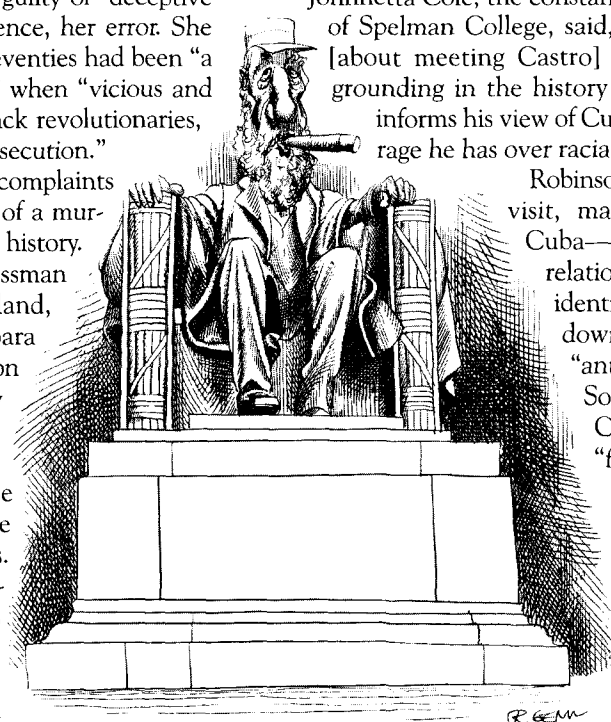
Last year, the Democratic National Committee appointed Carlottia Scott to its "senior political leadership team."

If black America has a secretary of state, it is Randall Robinson, the stylish and respected head of the Washington-based foreign-policy group TransAfrica. He is best known for his advocacy of intervention in Haiti, but he is also a full-fledged member of today's *Venceremos* Brigade. A year ago, he shuttled down to Havana with a party that included such luminaries as Danny Glover, the movie star. The trip was typical: All came back gushing. "I admire the relationship that Castro has with African-Americans," said Camille Cosby, wife of the entertainer. "It's nice to know that an international leader has that much interest in African-Americans."

Johnnetta Cole, the constantly honored former president of Spelman College, said, "What impressed me most [about meeting Castro] was the way in which his grounding in the history and reality of Afro-Cubans informs his view of Cuba; the sense of personal outrage he has over racial discrimination."

Robinson, in a lengthy report on the visit, made clear that his view of Cuba—its history, its problems, its relations with the United States—is identical to that of the regime, right down to his condemnation of "anti-revolutionary" elements in South Florida. Robinson found Castro utterly compelling—"frank and thoughtful."

It is this sort of thing that drives Cuban-Americans to near despair. Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart has said, "For the life of me, I just don't know how Castro can seem cute after forty years of torturing people."



Castro as the Great Emancipator, by Roman Genn

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The Presidential Record on Abortion

	Bush/Quayle Administration	Clinton/Gore Administration
Roe v. Wade Abortion Decision	President Bush urged the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade.*	President Clinton urged the Supreme Court to uphold *Roe v. Wade.*
Federal Abortion-on-Demand Law	President Bush said he would veto the so-called "Freedom of Choice Act," a bill that would have prohibited virtually any state restriction on abortion.	The Clinton/Gore Administration endorsed the so-called "Freedom of Choice Act."
Taxpayer Funding of Abortion	President Bush vowed, "I will veto any legislation that weakens current law or existing regulations" restricting abortion — and he did so, vetoing 10 bills that contained pro-abortion provisions.	The Clinton/Gore Administration urged Congress to make abortion part of a mandatory national health insurance "benefits package," forcing all taxpayers to pay for virtually all abortions.
Military Abortions	President Bush did not allow abortions at U.S. military facilities anywhere.	President Clinton ordered U.S. military facilities to provide abortions.
Abortion Counseling and Referral	President Bush prohibited 4,000 federally funded family planning clinics from counseling and referring for abortions.	President Clinton ordered federally funded family planning clinics to counsel and refer for abortion.
Use of Tissue from Aborted Babies	The Bush Administration refused to fund experimentation or transplants using tissue from aborted babies.	The Clinton/Gore Administration ordered federal funding of experiments using tissue from aborted babies.
Chemical Abortions	The Bush/Quayle Administration prohibited importation of the French abortion pill, RU 486.	President Clinton ordered his appointees to faciliate the introduction of RU 486 in the U.S.
The United Nations Population Fund and Abortion	President Bush vetoed U.S. funding of the UNFPA, citing that agency's participation in the management of China's forced abortion program.	President Clinton ordered a resumption of funding to the pro-abortion UNFPA, which participates in the management of China's forced abortion program.
Promotion of Abortion Overseas	President Bush enforced the "Mexico City Policy" which prohibited U.S.-funded organizations from performing abortions or trying to repeal the pro-life laws of developing countries.	President Clinton restored U.S. funding to pro-abortion organizations. The Clinton/Gore Administration declared abortion to be a "fundamental right of all women," and ordered U.S. ambassadors to lobby foreign governments in support of abortion.

National Right to Life
Educational Trust Fund

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So: How to account for the enduring affair between black elites in America and the tyrant on Cuba—immune, seemingly, to post-Solzhenitsyn, post-Valladares, post-Cold War awakenings? First, there is the simple pleasure of tweaking white, conservative sensibilities. As Latin America scholar Mark Falcoff observes, "Castro is anti-American; therefore he has to be good. Jesse Helms hates him; therefore he has to be good." Then there is the question of resentment felt by a slice of black America toward Cuban-Americans as a successful, and politically conservative, immigrant group. Then, too, there is the oft-expressed appreciation of Castro's military adventures in Africa, a gratitude for—as an article in *Emerge* recently put it—the "thousands of Cubans [who] volunteered in liberation wars in Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Angola, helping to defeat South Africa's apartheid military." Also, the idea persists that Castro, with his Communism, has been a friend to the poor. (The novelist Alice Walker: "Fidel Castro respects poor people, and I can see that when I go to Cuba.")

Above all, though, there is the belief—as fixed as it is false—that Castro has been good for black Cubans, that his takeover from Fulgencio Batista, the right-wing dictator who preceded him in power, meant a kind of emancipation for a previously shackled population. As Roger Wilkins puts it, with understatement, "Castro talks a better game on race than Batista." Batista, however, was himself partly black, and contemned by the Cuban upper crust because of it. He may have been no Harry Truman, but he opened up the army for people like himself. Castro, in contrast, has created a nomenklatura that is as pale as he is. Even Charlie Rangel, his eye ever on the prize of affirmative action, said recently, "I've been giving Cuba's officials hell because I don't see enough African-Cubans [in government]—but they've improved a great deal."

One final thing pervades the thinking of black elites about Cuba: fear of the end of Castro's rule, and of a freer, more capitalist Cuba, with hordes of white-skinned reactionaries streaming back from Miami. Assata Shakur, naturally, is worried: "If the U.S. succeeds in destroying the revolution, my status will be like that of most Cubans: I'll be up a creek without a paddle. It will be devastating for people worldwide who believe in justice." Jesse Jackson, though, trying to keep hope alive, has cautioned that "no one should suppose that when Fidel leaves the scene, all the revolution's handiwork will vanish with him . . . The decades have formed a generation of Cubans—through almost universal schooling, through universal health care, through doctors and teachers dispatched to desperate reaches of the world, through military missions against the likes of South Africa, through long moral purpose and conditionings—that will not easily be separated from that experience." Even so, "some rightist elements of the Cuban-American community [hope] to inherit the ruins after an apocalypse there. We simply cannot allow the policy of the United States to become captured by such ambitions."

If Castro ever does bid farewell, there will be rejoicing in many places, foremost in his prisons. But there will be mourning too—and none more heartfelt than in a segment of the American Left that has never stopped swooning over him, and that will fight with him till the last trump. **NR**

The Trouble with Authenticity

A less than ideal ideal

NORMAN PODHORETZ

WHATEVER else the presidential candidacy of John McCain may or may not accomplish, it has already been responsible for one notable development. In the way he has presented himself, and in his rhetoric, McCain has brought a significant ideal back into political discourse that had more or less gone into retirement—or perhaps only on a well-earned vacation—in the last few years. That ideal is *authenticity*.

As Mark Steyn recently observed in these pages, the feeling that McCain possesses or embodies this quality is what mainly accounts for the love affair the liberal media have been having with a candidate who, given his consistently conservative record on abortion, gun control, and the gay-rights movement, would normally be anathema to them. Or, to borrow Steyn's more pungent characterization of their normal attitude: "You gotta be nuts to believe this stuff." Thus far, however, McCain has not only been awarded a free pass by the liberal journalists covering and commenting on him; he has managed to make them even fonder of him by being "nuts." For that, too, is taken to be an element of his authenticity.

It is easy enough to explain why authenticity should have become so appealing in this presidential season. One need only mention the name of Bill Clinton—the man of shameless lies and of veritably surrealistic manipulations of language in the service of those lies—to understand how a hunger should have built up for a politician who is what he seems and seems what he is and says what he means and means what he says (even when what he says is either ill informed or patently wrong).

If, moreover, we sketch into the background against which McCain has emerged the figure of Al Gore—whose immortal phrase "no controlling legal authority" was topped only by Clinton's putative problem in defining the word "is"—the attractions of a straightforward, straight-talking candidate stand out in even sharper relief.

Nor is it only in contrast with the Democrats that McCain has come to look good. He has apparently also won the hearts even of many Republicans who (correctly) think that his positions on campaign-finance reform and the tobacco industry and taxes are as "nuts" as his record in the Senate strikes the liberals.

Again, it is easy enough to see why. I have never met George W. Bush, but watching him on television and listening to him deliver a scripted speech in the flesh, I have formed the impres-

Mr. Podhoretz, a senior fellow at the Hudson Institute, was for 35 years editor-in-chief of *Commentary* and is now its editor-at-large. His current book is *Ex-Friends*, and his next book, *My Love Affair with America*, will appear in July.

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sion that, like most politicians these days, he is a synthetic creature created by focus groups. People who know him and whom I trust tell me that this is flat-out mistaken. Nevertheless the sense remains that—in the only really great words Gertrude Stein ever wrote—"there's no there there." Here, too, McCain presents a dramatically different picture.

I know that he does because he has had this effect on me. The one time I met him was at a small breakfast meeting held long before his campaign took off and long before he became the darling of the media. I thought that his line on campaign-finance reform and the tobacco industry was nonsense, but somehow—even to a notorious ideologue like me—this seemed not to matter in comparison with something unfamiliar about him that I at first found it hard to put my finger on. And then, as I continued watching him, it came to me: There was a real person sitting in that chair. So refreshing did I find this that I was willing to overlook the substance of much of what he was saying. It soon became clear that I was not alone in responding to him in this way.

McCain has taken to comparing his efforts to reach out to Democrats and independents—a strategy forced on him by the lock that Bush evidently already had on the Republican vote going into the race—with what Ronald Reagan did in 1979–80 against Jimmy Carter. Yet a more relevant precedent would be Jimmy Carter's own campaign four years earlier against Gerald Ford, whom Carter implicitly treated as a stand-in for Nixon.

With Nixon as the ghostly reference point, Carter vowed that he would never lie to the American people; and now, with Clinton and Gore right smack out there in plain view playing the same role that Nixon did, McCain is making exactly the same promise and planting it at the center of his own campaign. And as Carter relied on his religious faith to lend credence to his vow of truthfulness, McCain is now leaning on his reputation for authenticity to back up his own claim that he will always tell the truth.

To be sure, it was not Jimmy Carter who first discovered the uses of authenticity in political campaigns. Even our greatest presidents have plucked the strings that John McCain is now strumming. Lincoln was "Honest Abe," and George Washington, in a legend that achieved such widespread currency that it might as well have been true, was supposedly so incapable of telling a lie that he confessed to cutting down the cherry tree. Straight talk, bluntness, and plainspokenness, as the outward and manifest signs of authenticity, have also made periodic appearances in American presidential campaigns from "Old Hickory" to Harry Truman.

Nor ought we to be surprised by this. For as the late literary critic Lionel Trilling demonstrated, the prestige of the idea of authenticity (like that of its milder and less demanding cousin, sincerity) has deep roots in our culture. One example of many that Trilling cites is from the parting speech Polonius makes to his son in *Hamlet*: "This above all: to thine own self be true,/And it must follow, as the night the day,/Thou canst not then be false to any man." And in the American context, Trilling points to three major examples. There was Nathaniel Hawthorne's exclamation: "Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst may be inferred." Then there was Ralph Waldo Emerson's "vivacious admiration" (as Trilling calls it) for the sincerity that he saw as the defining characteristic of the English. Finally there was Henry James's obverse admiration of the Americans as a wholly sincere people.

Though he took note of the virtual reverence accorded authenticity at the time he was writing (1971), Trilling did not linger long upon it. But he incisively observed that the word had become "part of the moral slang of our day." So indeed it had. In 1971, and throughout the rest of the decade, the spirit of the '60s was still very much alive. As David Frum brilliantly argues in his new book, *How We Got Here*, that spirit was spreading (or, as I would put it, metastasizing) through all classes of American society.

I myself well remember what the cult of authenticity involved. Its most popular slogan was "Let it all hang out." This represented an injunction not only to eschew reticence about one's private self but also to express one's opinions and ideas freely, no matter how offensive they might be to those being addressed or standing within earshot.

I remember well what the cult of authenticity involved. Its most popular slogan was 'Let it all hang out.'

The main arena was sex. But the injunction extended to any repudiation of, or alternative to, the middle-class morals or manners that were considered—as they had been among intellectuals and artists for well over a century by then—a pestilential breeding ground of pretense and hypocrisy. Socrates said that the unexamined life was not worth living. But to the apostles of authenticity, it was the socially conditioned life that was not worth living. The authentic was identified with the "natural" state of things, uncontaminated (at least as far as possible) by social influences.

Thus, anything grown was more authentic than anything manufactured; and anything wild was more authentic than anything cultivated. Thus, ghetto blacks, especially if they were thugs and criminals, were more authentically black than those who lived respectable lives. And thus—in perhaps the most outlandish expression of this ethos, espoused by psychiatrists like R. D. Laing, poets like Allen Ginsberg, and novelists like Ken Kesey—schizophrenics and other sufferers from mental disease were more authentic human beings than those who had purchased a reputation for normality by conforming to the standards of a society that was itself truly insane.

Obviously, no such extreme positions could be nakedly imported into the realm of electoral politics, where they would alienate and antagonize the many millions of voters who had not yet seen the light. Which is why the tyrannical demands of authenticity were translated in the political world into the relatively bland form of Jimmy Carter's self-proclaimed devotion to the truth.

In due course, however, the lengths to which the ideal of authenticity went provoked a backlash in realms other than the political. Trilling's book, *Sincerity and Authenticity*, was itself

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a sign of this new turn. For in addition to illuminating the dark underside of the ideal, Trilling resurrected a counter-tradition that was at least as solidly rooted in the culture—even the high culture—as the ideals of sincerity and authenticity. Emerson, he tells us, may have venerated the sincerity of the English, but this did not prevent him from writing in his journal that "There is no deeper dissembler than the sincerest man." Trilling also quotes Oscar Wilde's aphorism that "The first duty in life is to be as artificial as possible." To this he adds a list of literary artists and philosophers (including W. B. Yeats and Friedrich Nietzsche) who believed, along with Emerson, that "many men can write better in a mask than for themselves." Nothing could be further than this from the ethos of letting it all hang out.

It would be going much too far to claim that the tide was turned by Trilling's book. Certainly that book was the *locus classicus* of the challenge to the ideal of authenticity in the upper reaches of our culture, and as such, it must have had a trickle-down effect. Still, it was not widely enough read to have directly influenced the changed attitudes toward the pursuit of authenticity that I for one could sense forming as the 1970s marched on. By the end of the decade, for instance, a quiet recoil from the mindset that venerated authenticity could be detected in the almost complete disappearance of the idea that insanity represented a more realistic response to contemporary reality than normality.

So, too, the kind of in-your-face self-display of an Abbie Hoffman or a Jerry Rubin that had once been held up as a moral model came to seem embarrassing to many who had formerly regarded it as a sign of superior authenticity. Suddenly, "cool" was in and letting it all hang out was out. True, where race and ethnicity were concerned, the cult of authenticity maintained a firmer grip than elsewhere. But even there it no longer had the power to silence contending points of view or criticisms of its principal dogmas.

In politics, the new era was dominated by Ronald Reagan. Now, Reagan was a man who most assuredly did not hesitate to speak his mind bluntly and forthrightly, as when he described the Soviet Union as an evil empire. But he was at the same time a very private person whose affability was itself a kind of "mask" that kept his inner life hidden from view—so effectively that his officially appointed biographer, Edmund Morris, was driven nearly crazy in trying to penetrate it. With Reagan the ideal of authenticity, like so many elements of the counterculture he loathed, dropped out of sight in the political realm.

Nor, despite superficial appearances to the contrary, did it stage a comeback with the self-styled "comeback kid" Bill Clinton. Clinton did indeed make every effort to act as though he were a communicant in the church of authenticity, pretending (through the ostentatious biting of his lower lip, the willingness to talk about the type of underwear he favored, and so on) to the candor and the openness of the let-it-all-hang-out style. But the habitual transparent lying overrode the lip-biting and altogether disqualified him from membership in the cult.

The same thing happened to Al Gore. In his speeches at the Democratic national conventions, the nauseating exploitations of his son's accident and of his sister's death from lung cancer were in effect an application for admission into the cult. Yet Gore too was disqualified when he was exposed as a liar about his past relations with the tobacco companies that had supposedly killed his sister; and many more such lies would come to light as the years wore on.

Hence the true comeback in American politics of authenticity to the exalted status of a quality so admirable that it could trump serious differences over serious issues remained for someone else to bring about—and the someone else turned out to be John McCain.

But as a result of that accomplishment, a hard question now arises, and it is this: Does authenticity deserve the great prestige it has once again acquired?

My answer has to be a complicated one. For all that I have said against some of the forms the pursuit of authenticity has taken in recent years, and for all that I could say in favor of the competing tradition that emphasizes not self-expression but self-transcendence in the doing of one's duty as the road to personal fulfillment, I have to concede that, at its best, authenticity as a driving force of the moral life still has much to commend it.

On the other hand, political leaders, especially at the highest levels, simply cannot perform *their* duty under the aegis of this ideal. There are times when in the national interest they are required to mislead or baldly lie to the public (I am *not* thinking—need I add?—about sending for the Monicas but about sending out the Marines). Even short of this, it is inconceivable that any president could get through so much as a single day without resorting to deviousness in managing his supporters and to cunning in pursuing his objectives. (Even the greatest of our presidents, "Honest Abe," was not so honest about his intentions with regard to slavery, to cite only the most consequential of his wily political maneuvers.) The simple fact is that what constitutes a vice in private life is subject to transformation into virtue by the alchemy of high office; and conversely, private virtue can be disabling or downright dangerous in the political realm.

Herein lies the paradox of a claim like the one Carter advanced that he would never lie to the American people, and that McCain has now echoed. As a moment's reflection reveals, it is almost impossible for private individuals to make good on such a claim among themselves. But for any president to do so is absolutely impossible. Which means that it is itself a lie.

The sanctimonious Carter gave every indication of being a big enough fool not to know this, and was therefore in all probability lying to himself as well as to the voters. There is no trace of sanctimoniousness in McCain, and I very much doubt that he is a fool at all, let alone one in Carter's league. My guess is that his promise not to lie is a tactic in the overall strategy he stumbled into of playing to the old American lust for authenticity.

The upshot is that, unless he has by now fallen for his own propaganda (which I hope is not the case because, in spite of my better political judgment, I still cannot help liking him, and I am still awestruck by the honor of his behavior as a prisoner of war in Vietnam), the lie embedded in the driving motif of his campaign is directed only at the electorate and not at himself. Either way, however, the paradox embedded in his Carteresque promise has gone unnoticed by McCain's friends and foes alike.

Meanwhile, no matter what the final outcome of his candidacy should be, it has already aroused the sleeping giant of a tradition that, take it for all in all, has done more harm than good in its long march through our politics and our culture. **NR**

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THE VICE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, D.C.

February 15, 2000

Dear Rusty:

I'm sitting here on the campaign bus—no, not the bus, the plane; I don't know why I said bus—and taking a sip of Sprite—no, not Sprite, orange juice; why did I say Sprite?—and thought I'd write you a short note just to say "hi."

Okay, that's not true. I'm practicing a new technique to keep myself from saying little things that aren't exactly one-hundred percent true. See, I have this small problem with exaggeration. So what I came up with was a technique to break myself of the habit. I just simply stop whatever I'm saying the moment I say it and correct the record. It's awkward, of course. But I think it'll work.

Okay, see, I just said "I came up with" this technique. That isn't strictly true, and I can see how someone might interpret the statement "I came up with this technique" as possibly potentially meaning that the technique I'm employing was come up with by me, which it wasn't. A Dr. Greene from Bethesda came up with it—he calls it "Direct Cognitive Correction"—and I'm presently under his observation.

Now that the media seems obsessed with the Republican race for the nomination, I thought it would be a good time to work on some personal stuff. Tipper thought it would be a good time for me to work on some personal stuff. I knew Dr. Greene from my pre-med days at Harvard, so it was an easy call to make. I had never met Dr. Greene before, he didn't go to Harvard, and when I was an undergraduate there, I was never pre-med.

Let me start again. Okay. Deep breath. I am not afraid of the truth. I am not afraid of the truth. Okay. One more time.

I'm not sure where I developed this bad habit. Years ago, when I was working on what eventually became known as the "Heimlich Maneuver," I remember performing it on myself with such force that I passed out. Nothing ever looked the same to me, and despite the deep satisfaction I get knowing that my technique—named after Old Man Heimlich, the first man whose life I saved—well, not the first man whose life I saved, but the first I saved using that specific technique—I mean, I saved dozens of lives before that, Rusty, during my summers working as a lifeguard and as a volunteer paramedic—anyway, despite the gratitude of Rabbi Heimlich—did I mention he was a rabbi? I'm a published rabbinical scholar, which is how Rabbi Heimlich and I happened to be eating together when he managed to get a piece of rugelach down the wrong pipe—anyway, despite his gratitude, I still feel that those few minutes when I passed out—I was clinically dead, according to the attending physicians, and felt like I was drifting through a beautiful meadow until I came into the presence of a wise and wonderful lion, who told me to return to the "earth plane" because I had many things still to accomplish, like saving the environment and preserving a woman's right to choose—I never quite felt right after that.

What? God, that's weird. I'm re-reading that paragraph and I'm not sure where, exactly, it came from. The part about the lion sounds true, but I can't say for certain. I mean, I wouldn't swear to it in court or anything, especially if it was a meaningless civil matter.

Let me just take a breath here.

I'll be honest, Rusty: I'm not sure what, exactly, is the problem. But Tipper is convinced that this is the kind of thing that will eventually hurt me politically. Personally, I think she's nuts. I've been elected six times—once as President of the United States—so I think history tells a different story.

Man! I just can't stop myself. Where did I pick this up? At Harvard? In Vietnam? Those five years I spent in a tiger cage in the Hanoi Hilton, refusing to give anything but my name, rank, and serial number? I was never a POW. I was never in a tiger cage. I did go to Vietnam, and I was shot at and fired upon. I was never shot at or fired upon, and I did not see combat. I was a journalist.

I was a journalist. I was a crusading liberal journalist. Is that where I developed this bad habit?

Still working—

Al

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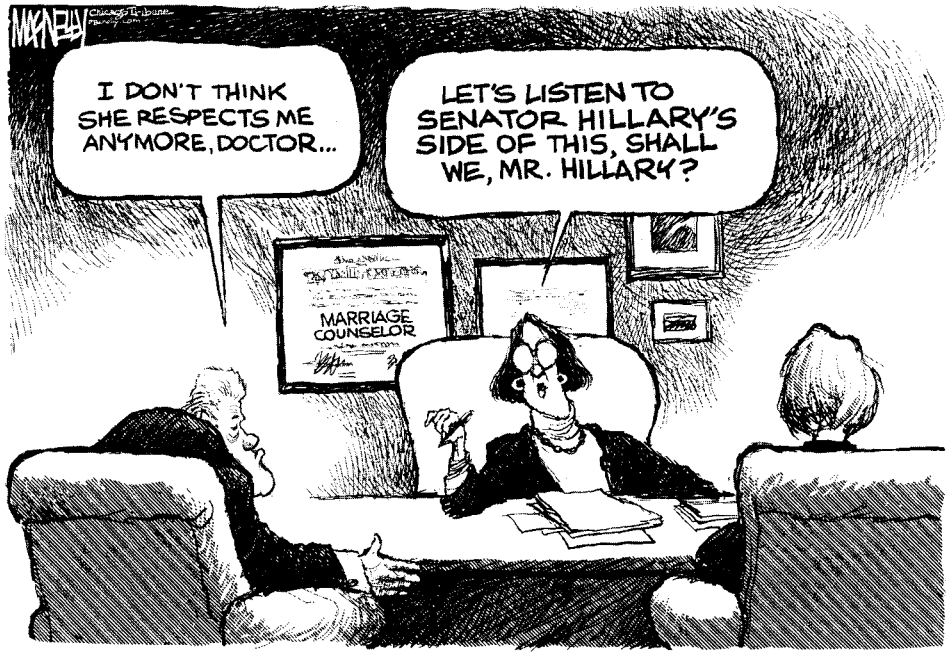
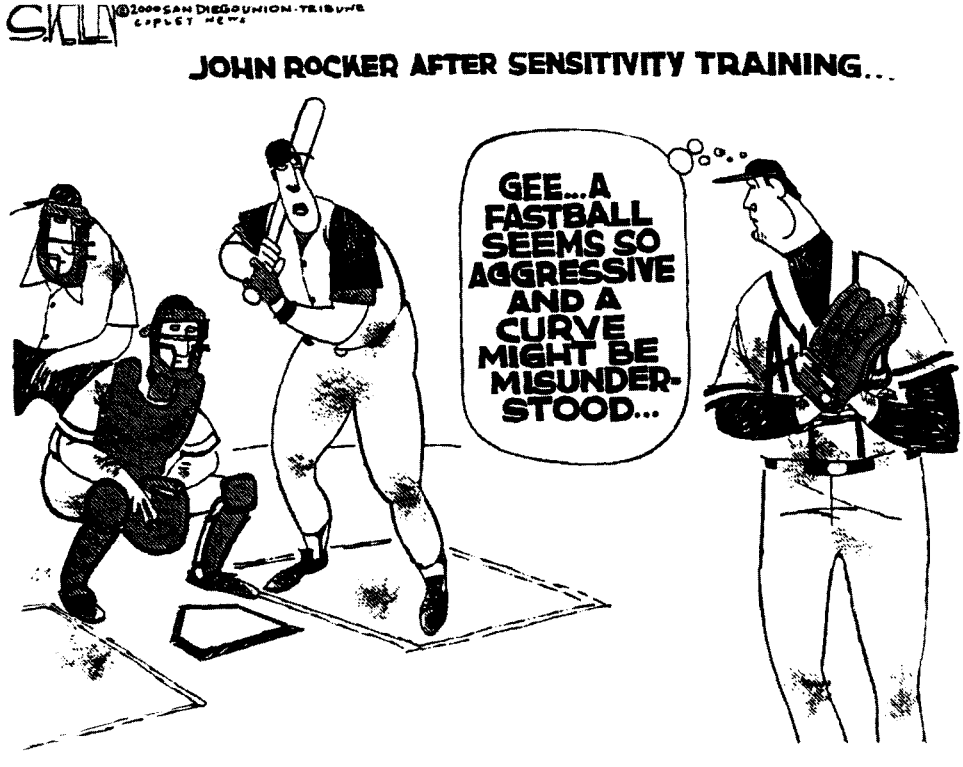
HELP!!!!


I DON'T THINK SHE RESPECTS ME ANYMORE, DOCTOR...
LET'S LISTEN TO SENATOR HILLARY'S SIDE OF THIS, SHALL WE, MR. HILLARY?
MARRIAGE COUNSELOR


©2000 SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE
JOHN ROCKER AFTER SENSITIVITY TRAINING...
GEE... A FASTBALL SEEMS SO AGGRESSIVE AND A CURVE MIGHT BE MISUNDER-STOOD...

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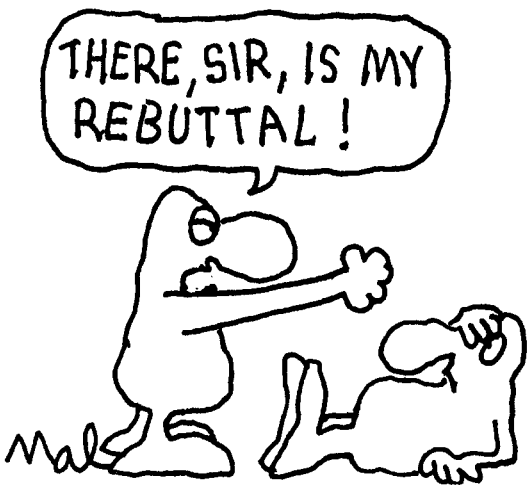
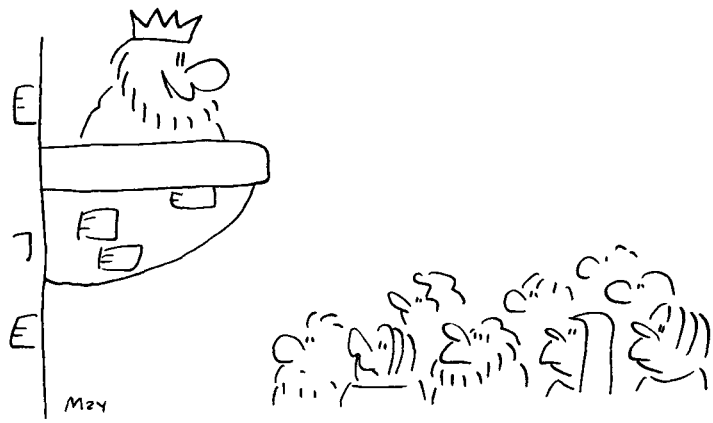
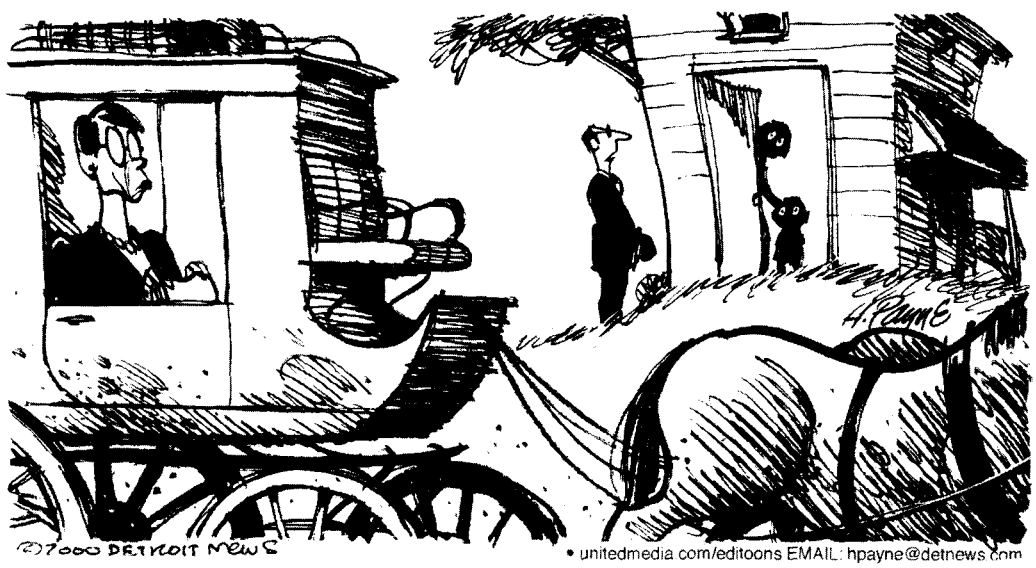




"You'll all be pleased to hear that I've lowered interest rates so you can borrow money to pay your taxes."



"MS. RENO IS SORRY THE BOY'S MOTHER DIED WHILE ESCAPING ON THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD... BUT SHE SAYS HE BELONGS WITH HIS FATHER BACK ON THE PLANTATION."

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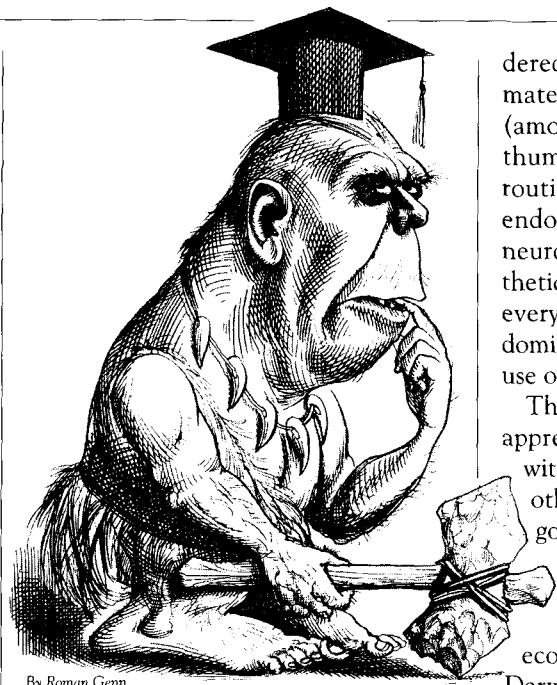
Biology Plus

LIONEL TIGER

Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny, by Robert Wright (Pantheon, 544 pp., $27.50)

THE bone of contention between God and Darwin has been marinating for so long you would think that by now the matter in question must have endured a change of state. Not so, because—however drastically evolutionary science demystifies our origins, and emphasizes the continuities between human and animal nature—there remains a haunting question: Is that all there is to the story of human development? Are we just a bunch of hubris-stricken know-it-alls? Or is there a responsible and pleasing middle ground between the maniacal precision of astrology or the arrogance of self-righteous ayatollahs and the granite imperviousness of some scientists to any experiences that seem to go beyond the known rules of the physical world?

In his humane and carefully written book on the issue, Robert Wright mixes one part deep biology, one part Teilhard de Chardin on a diet, one part What-Is-This-World-Coming-To? chat, and one part spiky intellectual history, to ask nothing less than: What is the meaning of life? Among other terse amusements, he effectively challenges the anti-historicism of Isaiah Berlin and Karl Popper, who claim, in essence, that there is no direction to evolution, let alone to history itself. He also singles out for special and delighted contumely the inconsistent bloviations of Stephen Jay Gould, whose eccentric theory of "punctuated equilibrium" (don't ask) Wright claims has been an ace in the otherwise poor hand being played by creationists. And he pulls the ladder out from under any claimants to human moral superiority atop the great chain of being.



By Roman Genn

Wright's last book, *The Moral Animal*, explored arguments drawn from comparative biology about the capacity of animals, including humans, to engage in pro-social actions, especially where kin are concerned. Though it relied perhaps too heavily on "evolutionary psychology," which has become a chic sub-department of biosociology, it was an ambitious work that made a useful difference to the revitalized intellectual and scientific colloquy about human nature.

Wright's new and even more ambitious work, *Nonzero*, has a sturdy moral agenda. He perceives that modern biology offers a greater sense of nature's goodness than does the influential Hobbesian understanding. He takes full advantage of the fact that public dialogue is now utterly suffused by Darwinian thinking. Whereas in the 1950s, students of anthropology pondered the disjunctions between primates and humans, symbolized by (among other things) the opposable thumb, nowadays major newspapers routinely discuss ape culture, human endocrines, the political impact of neurotransmitters, the biology of aesthetics, and the evolutionary origins of everything from adultery and political dominance to the infant's smile and the use of eyeshadow.

Though the fact has yet to be fully appreciated, Darwin's preoccupation with sexual and natural selection and other genetically mediated behaviors governs intellectual life at the dawn of the 21st century, just as Marx's preoccupations dominated the 20th. Marx's assertion of universal economic laws has been replaced by Darwin's gentle but equally explosive announcement of universal evolutionary laws. The powerful concern with environmental pollution has its parallel in a growing concern about human nature and the suitability of various social arrangements. The emergent question is: Can human nature be polluted by conditions antithetical to the human spirit?

It's clear that Marxists, Maoists, and other utopians have been more or less unable to fundamentally renovate human nature. And there is now firm ground for the suspicion that we might be able to create a kind of biologically based bill of behavioral rights, which would unite scientific knowledge with moral judgment.

It appears clearer than ever that if you want to change, or even preserve, a natural system, you must understand it first. Hence biology becomes a necessary feature of social and political knowledge.

Wright underscores this insight with generous and urgent scholarship about everything from the function of war

Mr. Tiger, author of *The Decline of Males*, is a professor of anthropology at Rutgers University and a columnist for *New York Press*.

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among native North American peoples (he is particularly clear about Lewis Henry Morgan, a founding father of American anthropology) to the origins of language. Reflecting his sense of sentient life's growing integration, he is plausibly, if sentimentally, enthusiastic about the social meaning of the euro—though he clearly did not anticipate that the flood of European investment in America would cost it some 18 percent of its value in one short year. He also assembles intriguing information about the forms of communication and their relationship to ruling groups, and muses about the reasons for the different economic outcomes of Asian centralized government compared with the brashness of the nation-states of Europe. And he sees the burgeoning international buffet of new forms of inexpensive communication as an almost inevitable consequence of what he calls "the logic of unity."

Wright contends that the process of life is not random, capricious, or directionless. Beginning with the primordial soup and continuing on through the phyla, Wright guides the reader helpfully, even amusingly, through the evolutionary process, revealing at every step nature's bias toward complexity and hence cooperation. He makes more efficient use of traditional anthropology than most professionals by avoiding the sectarian feuds of that argumentative trade. Even if he relies too heavily on the over-celebrated experiments on the "prisoners' dilemma"—a game-theory model of cooperative behavior—he nonetheless firmly sketches the case for Aristotle's dictum that "Man is by nature a political animal," emphasizing the phrase, "by nature." The decisive analyses by William Hamilton and Robert Trivers of animals' genetic strategy of cooperation along lines of kinship provide a basis for comprehending their extension to larger human structures, including businesses and polities.

Such cooperation is as "natural" as warfare. "Natural," of course, is the word most objectionable to those complaining about the overall approach. But the word has been corrupted by the modern health-food industry. Polio is as natural as jogging. To say that something is "natural" means not that it is inevitable, but that the potential for it exists in the genotype. This in turn implies that it is merely prudent to bear in mind the potential of that "natural" behavior and act accordingly. Wright approvingly cites Francis Bacon, who announced, "Nature, to be commanded, must be obeyed."

Wright's title, *Nonzero*, refers to his assertion that there is a point to evolution. It's not just for nothing. Human culture and social elaboration represent its current state. He refuses to concede

■

Wright guides the reader through the evolutionary process, and his book eventually merges into a kind of biotheology, evoking a pantheistic sense of wonder.

■

that the overwhelming tendency for animals to adapt to environments and one another with increasing accuracy, as well as complexity, is merely happenstance, and could just as well have been the reverse. The subtitle of his book really should have been "The Biologic of Human Destiny," because the process Wright seeks to account for is almost musical, and certainly does not suggest the inexorable certainty commonly associated with logic.

Wright's approach reflects neither cynical scorn for human complexity, nor self-righteous anti-clericalism, nor despair of human exceptionalism. He has the deepest respect for the remarkable nature of human nature, and seems more than willing to place religious enthusiasts among its most worthy describers. He may not agree with, or even understand, the sources of their stories. He may also deplore the many violent actions committed in the cause of self-confident piety. But in a deceptively arch final chapter—"You Call This a God?"—he reminds us that the origin of the word "religion" is the Latin *ligare*, to bind.

And this is where the book merges into a kind of biotheology. It evokes a pantheistic sense of wonder and respect for the meandering delta of life, even though—or perhaps because—there is only frail evidence of a specific clear-cut God. (On the other hand, though Wright doesn't explore it, there is a neuro-physiological basis for religious belief, as outlined in my 1979 book *Optimism: The Biology of Hope*.) What other evidence there is has usually to be taken on faith, which for many responsible people begs the question altogether.

There also remains the ancient problem of astonishing and seemingly unnecessary evil in a world putatively set in motion by a God supposed to be worth serving. Wright's solution is: Accept the evil and do what you can about it, because being dead is rarely preferable to living, however hard life may be. He correctly avoids the severe anti-clericalism of Richard Dawkins, who, as a naturalist, shouldn't be so willing to pronounce unnatural something that nearly all human beings take seriously.

Readers may take or leave Wright's ruminations on a host of issues, such as the information revolution, the Internet, and the merging of states into a global political system. But they are provided with witty style, energy, and an attractive sort of bold humility. And while it seems easy to disagree with the glib U.N. Charter–style internationalism that seems to underlie his position, in fact there is a good case to be made for his view. On what basis can one disagree with his argument about the emergent globalism of human communication? Do only retrograde forces, such as the ministries of information in China and Afghanistan, stand between human parochialism and "We-Are-the-World" universalism?

The most colorful and appealing argument in favor of Wright's hypothesis of increasing biosocial complexity is nothing more or less than the modern world itself. Not proof, of course—but it bears watching. **NR**

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Shaken, Not Stirred

BENJAMIN CHEEVER

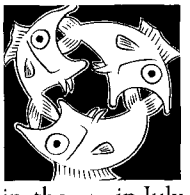
About Town: The New Yorker *and the World It Made*, by Ben Yagoda (Scribner, 480 pp., $27.50)

Gone: The Last Days of The New Yorker, by Renata Adler (Simon & Schuster, 256 pp., $25)

SINCE the 79-year-old William Shawn was forcibly retired in 1987 and *The New Yorker* magazine began to hemorrhage prestige and then cash (more than $150 million to date), there has been a furious debate among the New York cognoscenti about what went wrong. It's the same bitter disappointment we faced with poverty in this country and guerrilla insurgencies abroad: We don't understand what money can't buy.

And yet Ben Yagoda and Renata Adler—two writers as different as it is possible for one culture to produce—both seem to know the secret. Reading their books back to back reminds me of the joke about why there's no ice in Poland: The woman who knew the recipe died.

Yagoda is the perfect outsider. His mother, coming to the city in the 1940s, "seized on *The New Yorker* as a kind of talisman for Manhattan sophistication." She passed this infatuation on to her son and for his birthday presented him with two shares of stock in the company. "But being a part-owner did not help me crack the magazine," he ruefully reports, having collected a "sheaf of *New Yorker* rejection notes . . ." Unlike many of his contemporaries, who write to get even, Yagoda writes to understand and celebrate the club that wouldn't have him for a member. If his book has a weakness, it is an excess of awe. The introduction, for instance, features a letter written by a woman who while in the Red Cross during World War II met a wounded soldier who said that his one wish in extremity was for "an issue of *The New Yorker* magazine." They had a diverting conversation; then he died.



One can't help admiring Yagoda's willingness to put his own prejudices, even his own prose, aside; writing, as all the best historians do, only when there is no original text. And there's a lot of text to work with, much of it choice. Yagoda bases his book firmly on the 2,500 archival boxes that the magazine contributed to the New York Public Library in 1994. Among the treasures thus unearthed, we stumble immediately upon the irascible founder, Harold Ross, a man known to say often: "God, how I pity me."

"I started this magazine because I thought it would be so much fun to run a humorous magazine, you'd just sit and laugh at funny contributions all the time," he wrote to Frank Sullivan in 1931. But if you think he meant that, you've mistaken the man. Ross had edited humor before. He knew better. He meant to make Sullivan laugh.

Still, putting out a good magazine, even a good humor magazine, doesn't mean that everybody's having fun. "I was so goddamn bloody mad about the cutting and changing which was done in the first galley, and so discouraged by the attitude of the magazine editors in general, that I have been unable to write anything since. I decided that I didn't want all the sorrow and heart boiling that editors cause, not any more any way, and I decided that I would give up whole time writing for the time being and earn my living as a bookmaker instead." So fussed a contributor in July of 1949. One assumes that such a sourpuss must have taken up another trade, but the writer was Roald Dahl.

Yagoda ends his narrative in 1987 with Shawn's retirement; the years since are covered in a brief epilogue, effectively dodging the question of the magazine's fate after Shawn. "This is not to imply that the magazine as it exists today doesn't have loyal readers or publish outstanding work," he writes, hedging noisily. In contrast, longtime *New Yorker* contributor Renata Adler begins her book by leaping Yagoda's hedge. *Gone* is her title. "The audience, like filings when the magnet has been removed, has scattered."

Adler is Yagoda's exact opposite: the ultimate insider. A "strikingly intelligent" (Yagoda's words) young woman who came on board in 1963, her first assignment was to critique twelve unsigned stories. She wrote at length why each should be rejected. She was hired, and then saw every story she had turned down subsequently run in the magazine, "virtually unchanged."

■

The New Yorker was a club, meant to have a limited circulation, seeking Milton's readers—'fit . . . though few.'

■

If Yagoda's book is an education, Adler's is a treat. She seems never to have learned how to prevaricate. Lillian Ross's and Ved Mehta's *New Yorker* memoirs are filleted, their weaknesses extracted and admired. She describes Stephen Florio, the publisher after the Fleischmanns sold the magazine in 1985, as "young, blustering, cheerful, coarse, incompetent." Writer Adam Gopnik is Florio's "editorial counterpart." We hear about his laugh, and that his style as an essayist "actively insults the reader." There's even a scene where he appears in the editor's office "rubbing his hands together and blinking against the light. . . . If there had been music, it might have been a moment in a horror film."

Adler gives a good deal of space to the publication's decline, running us through the annals of succession. Shawn was replaced by Robert Gottlieb in 1987. Gottlieb was replaced by Tina Brown in 1992. "Ms. Brown (Tina to the rest of us) liked to say that the magazine, during her tenure, had won 'more than 15 prizes.' The magazine . . . had become, in many respects, a public-relations firm, generating buzz about itself and its editors, in hopes of generating advertisers and gossip—a redundant and circular mechanism, in other words, for generating ads for ads and gossip about gossip. None of these

Continued on page 57

Mr. Cheever's most recent novel is *Famous After Death.*

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JOIN WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR., LEADING CONSERVATIVES, & THE EDITORS OF NATIONAL REVIEW AS WE DISCUSS POLITICS, ENJOY THE SUN, SAND, AND STARS, AND CELEBRATE OUR 45TH ANNIVERSARY ON THE

National Review 2000

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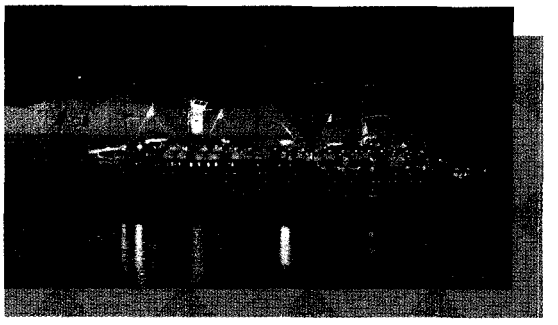
Already some 60 cabins (spacious, graceful, and affordable!) have been reserved by *NR* cruise alumni. They'll be spending seven glorious days enjoying six stimulating political seminars featuring WFB, *NR* editors, and our special guests (these sessions allow for ample "Q&A"), and some fantastic social events, including two cocktail receptions and two late-night "smokers" (featuring world-class H. Upmann cigars!), and intimate dining with our editors and guests!

Join them for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to schmooze with leading conservatives and to cruise in style and luxury. On the following pages you'll find everything you need to know about this event (itinerary, ship, ports, travel options, cabin rates, etc.), plus an application form (so you can sign up *now*—no need to wait for an information package to be mailed to you).

Don't delay: Reserve your stateroom *today*. We look forward to seeing you on the ***National Review 2000 Post-Election Caribbean Cruise.***

The Elegant *Wind Surf*



This airy and elegant five-masted, 617-foot cruise yacht surrounds you with a mix of natural fabrics and polished wood, its gorgeous interior lit by huge windows that frame the beautiful blue sea. Weighing in at 14,745 tons and hosting an intimate capacity of just 312 passengers, throughout this graceful vessel (you may even get the chance to sail it!) you'll find quiet corners and intimate retreats, and so much more, including a full library (stocked with books, CDs, and videos), a casino, two hot tubs/jacuzzis, two outdoor saltwater pools, a Water Sports platform (equipped with windsurfers, sailboats, water-ski boats, and scuba and snorkeling gear galore), a fitness center with an aerobics studio, the Wind Spa, a sauna, a full-service salon, the Wind Surf Lounge and Compass Rose Piano and Pool Bars, the Sports and Signature Shops, and, in addition to the main Dining Room, the Veranda Bistro (wherever you eat, the seating is always "open" and the attire always casual). The service is pampering and unsurpassed (the crew is the *crème de la crème* of Holland American Line's family).

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SUITE: You may get lost in the cavernous 376 square feet of polished wood, natural fabrics, and luxury comfort. Each *Wind Surf* Suite is equipped with a CD player, VCR, multi-channel radio, swivel-mounted television (the ship's library has 500 videos and CDs available), and mini-bar (restocked daily). There are "His and Hers" bathrooms *avec* fragrant soaps, hairdryers, and terry-cloth bathrobes. Full-length closets and *beaucoup* drawers offer storage galore. See the deep blue sea from two classic porthole windows. Dream sweet dreams as you sleep on a comfortable queen-sized bed (which can be converted into two twin-sized beds). Entertain newfound friends in the large sitting area. Life is good!

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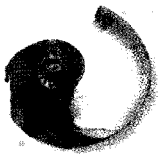
SIGN UP TODAY FOR SEVEN SUNNY DAYS AND BALMY NIGHTS OF HOT POLITICAL TALK AND COOL LUXURY CRUISING TO EXOTIC PORTS ON THE *NR*-ONLY CHARTER OF THE RENOWNED *WIND SURF*!



Idyllic Ports of Call

St Barthélemy, Leeward Islands. Picture-perfect, tiny "St Barts" has long been the haunt of the very rich who come for privacy, gorgeous beaches, and exquisite French cuisine. It has 20 or more magnificent beaches, linked by hilly narrow roads you can explore in open-air Jeeps or "mini-mokes." In Gustavia, the island's Lilliputian port, quaint streets lead past small markets and bakeries—and dozens of small shops selling French perfumes, sportswear, watches, and crystal.

Bridgetown, Barbados. This infectiously happy island, with beautiful beaches and balmy weather, has a delightful British flair. As a result of its successful sugar economy in the 17th and 19th centuries, you'll find large manor estates full of fine Barbados mahogany and antiques, along with gaily painted wooden-frame houses—the essence of the festive Caribbean. Rum rules in Barbados, and, over the centuries, cane plantations have divided the landscape into a pretty patchwork of fields, coconut and royal palms, breadfruit, oleander, and citrus trees. (P.S.: We'll be offering pre- and post-cruise options at the famous Sam Lord's Castle!)

Iles des Saintes, Lesser Antilles. Pastoral and far off the beaten track, the Saintes are a cluster of eight islands off the southern coast of Guadeloupe. In Bourg, the charming hamlet on Terre-de-Haut, the largest island, you can wander peaceful streets past small houses, then follow the narrow road out of town through fields and hills to a sweeping strand of secluded beaches.

Nevis, Leeward Islands. Nevis is an almost-perfect volcanic cone rising up from the sea and covered with bougainvillea, hibiscus, and many other lush tropical plants. For a time we'll be anchoring outside of Charlestown, the island's capital, for those who wish to go ashore on tours or on their own, then repositioning to a nearby idyllic beach for an afternoon of watersports, sunning, and a festive beach barbecue prepared by the ship's crew.

Pigeon Island, St. Lucia, Windward Islands. The twin towers of the Pitons, two volcanic peaks rising to more than 2,400 feet, mark St. Lucia, an island of lush green valleys, acres of banana plantations, and bubbling sulfur springs. Some 24 miles of vibrant reef make St. Lucia a haven for divers and snorkelers. Pigeon Island National Park, a 40-acre island connected to the mainland by a causeway, was once a pirates' hideaway. Today, impressive ruins of old English forts, archaeological relics of Arawak Indians, and splendid beaches make this a fascinating place to explore.

St Martin, Dutch Antilles. St Martin, the "French" side of this beautiful island (the "Sint Maarten" half is Dutch) of white-sand beaches (over 10 miles!), features the *chic* capital, Marigot, of shops, bistros, and charming cafés. Cross the border and head for Philipsburg, where you will find gingerbread West Indian buildings that house excellent duty-free shops.

Exciting, Exclusive Itinerary

DATE	DAY	PORT/TIMES	EXCLUSIVE *NR* EVENTS
Dec. 10	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados	Midnight departure
Dec. 11	Monday	At Sea	Seminars, Morning & Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 12	Tuesday	Nevis, 8AM–5PM	Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 13	Wednesday	St Martin, 8AM–1AM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 14	Thursday	St Barthélemy, 8AM–5PM	Seminar, Morning
Dec. 15	Friday	Iles des Saintes, 8AM–5PM	Seminar, Afternoon Late-night smoker (post-dinner)
Dec. 16	Saturday	Pigeon Island, St. Lucia, 7AM–4PM	Seminar, Afternoon Cocktail Reception (pre-dinner)
Dec. 17	Sunday	Bridgetown, Barbados, 6AM arrival	

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2000 POST-ELECTION CRUISE APPLICATION

Mail to: National Review Cruise, The Cruise Authority, 1307 Powers Ferry Rd., Marietta, GA 30067-5409 or Fax to 770-916-1425

Please fill out application completely and mail with deposit check or fax with credit-card information. One application per cabin. If you want more than one cabin, make copies of this application. For questions call The Cruise Authority at 800-326-4971.

PERSONAL

Name #1 (full legal name) + Nickname shirt size (M/L/XL)

Name #2 (full legal name) + Nickname shirt size (M/L/XL)

Names #3 & #4 (if taking others in your cabin)

Street Mailing Address

City State Zip

( )

Daytime Phone

PAYMENT

A deposit of $1,500 per cabin is due with this application. Cabins and Categories are available on a first come, first served basis.

☐ My deposit of $1,500 per cabin is included.
(Make checks payable to "National Review Cruise")

☐ Charge to: AmEx ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

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Expiration Date (Month) ☐☐ (Year) ☐☐

Each time you use the National Review *credit card to make a purchase, the card's issuer, MBNA America Bank, N.A., will make a contribution to* National Review!

Authorized Signature of Cardholder/Guest

Information and a price quote on Cancellation Fee Waiver/Medical Insurance will accompany your statement. Cancellation Penalty Schedule follows (cancellations must be received in writing by the date indicated):

Prior to July 11, 2000	$75 per person
July 11 to September 11, 2000	$750 per person
After September 11, 2000	100% of cruise

CRUISE

(*All rates are per person, double occupancy. Single rates available upon request.* Air/Sea rates include roundtrip air and transfers from select gateways, all port charges and taxes, all gratuities, meals, entertainment, and *National Review* activities. Cruise-only rates include all of above except airfare. Failure to appear for embarkation for any reason constitutes a cancellation subject to full penalties. Personal items not included.)

BE SURE TO CHECK ALL APPLICABLE BOXES FOR YOUR CRUISE!

I. CABIN CATEGORY

Choice of Cabin Category: ☐ Suite (*limited*!) ☐ Deluxe Cabin

Bedding: Beds made up as ☐ Twin ☐ Queen

Booking Single?: Do you want us to try to match you with a roommate?

☐ Yes (your age ____) ☐ No

II. AIR/TRANSFER PACKAGES

☐ I/we will provide our own roundtrip air to Barbados (see below).

☐ Book my air from _____ (see list below).

III. GENERAL INFORMATION

Citizenship: Is everyone a U.S. citizen? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If No, indicate citizenship_____

Special Information (medical conditions, celebrating anniversary, etc.)

IMPORTANT

Everyone cruising will be required to bring either a valid passport OR a certified birth certificate (with raised seal), plus photo ID. Failure to do so may result in being denied boarding of the *WindSurf*. Children do not require photo ID.

CONDITIONS FOR PASSAGE: H2O, Ltd. d/b/a The Cruise Authority or National Review, Inc., its owners, agents or employees accept no responsibility whatsoever for illness, accident, death, dismemberment, weather, strikes, acts of God, or the accessibility, appearance, actions, or decisions of those individuals promoted for the cruise. Nor can the above-mentioned entities be held responsible for the actions of Holland America Line/Windstar Cruises, participating air carriers, or shoreside personnel or subcontractors. Return of this application indicates full understanding and acceptance of these conditions for passage.

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AIR TRAVEL TO BARBADOS: Due to the nature of the cruise, Windstar Cruises is unable to offer extensive airfare options. Please consider one of the following options for making air transportation to Barbados for the cruise. Please know that you **must** arrive in Bridgetown, Barbados, *no later than 10:00PM on Sunday, December 10, 2000*, in order to make the ship in time for sailing. Do **not** schedule a return flight before 9:00AM on Sunday, December 17, 2000 (this will allow you ample time to disembark the *WindSurf*, transfer, and go through customs). Complimentary roundtrip transfers to/from the airport will be provided, but you must forward your air schedule to The Cruise Authority no later than November 24, 2000. **OPTION 1**: Book your own air schedule, making certain to adhere to the times discussed above. This option gives you the greatest flexibility and control over your air schedule. **OPTION 2**: You may contact American Airlines and access a discount group fare which has been set up specifically for the *National Review* group. Call toll-free, 1-800-433-1790, and refer to **Star File #69DOUA**. Make your booking and pay for it as you normally would with any airline. **OPTION 3**: Book your air via Windstar Cruises from the "gateways" listed below. A forced overnight may be required either pre- or post-cruise, at your expense, and we have no control over when or if it will be required. Prices are per person, round trip, coach. Gateways with asterisk marks (**) traditionally require a forced overnight in Miami ($132) or Barbados ($195):

Atlanta	$760	Detroit	$1,010	Oklahoma City	$940	San Francisco	$980
Baltimore	$850	Houston	$910	Orlando	$760	Seattle**	$1,060
Boston	$740	Kansas City	$930	Philadelphia	$750	St. Louis	$1,060
Chicago	$860	Los Angeles	$930	Phoenix**	$1,070	Tampa	$760
Cincinnati	$990	Miami	$660	Pittsburgh	$900	Tucson	$1,060
Cleveland	$920	Minneapolis	$1,070	Portland**	$1,070	Washington, DC	
Dallas	$900	New Orleans	$800	Salt Lake City**	$1,050	(DCA or IAD)	$780
Denver	$980	New York	$830	San Diego**	$1,040		

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Continued from page 52
breaks with the magazine's tradition, it might be said, slowed the financial disintegration of the magazine."

Brown left in 1998 and the Pulitzer Prize-winning writer David Remnick took over as editor of a magazine that by then had jettisoned most of its distinguishing characteristics. Adler feels the loss keenly. "For more than 30 years," she writes, "*The New Yorker* was not only the finest magazine of its time but probably the finest English-language magazine of all time."

Was it? Hard for me to be objective. I revered *The New Yorker* as my father's employer, the publication in which he most frequently appeared, and the one that paid our bills. Because it had a sense of humor, I also adored it. Today I'm still in awe, but not in love. This may be partly sour grapes. I'm grown now and haven't simply inherited my father's mantle. Like Yagoda, I've received my share of tasteful yellow letters of rejection.

But I'd already fallen out of love with *The New Yorker* during the 1970s, when the magazine stopped laughing at itself. Plus, it had an interest in my generation that sometimes bordered on the craven. If my love was unrequited, I can still see that it was a great magazine, started in laughter and sustained with an honor and integrity that may have been unprecedented in a publication of its size. The humor fell away, but the integrity did not. Or not until Shawn lost his edge.

Adler is a prime exemplar of *The New Yorker*'s second phase, a paradigm of courage. In her precise delineations of dishonesty and careerism she approaches humor, but stops at savagery. Her ruthlessness has attracted the most attention, prompting long thumbsuckers in the *New York Times* and just about everywhere else. Tsk tsk, Adler has said, and they all come tsking back. Who was foolish? Who was wicked? Who was wrong? All of which is great fun to read, like watching a catfight, but not exactly edifying. Nor is it evocative of any great journalistic traditions, unless we consider backbiting a great journalistic tradition.

After *The New Yorker* turned me down for a position as a fact checker, I got a job with *Reader's Digest*, another fantastically successful publication that has since strolled off a cliff. Harold Ross and DeWitt Wallace didn't admire each other, but both men insisted on publishing material that they did admire. Both editors also had control over advertising, and not the reverse. Unlike *Reader's Digest*, which was meant for everybody, *The New Yorker* was a club, meant, I think, to have a limited circulation, seeking Milton's readers—"fit . . . though few." When the magazine attempted expansion, it did mortal damage to its image. Imagine the Century Club on a membership drive.

I know it's counterintuitive, but at both publications the most money was made when moneymen didn't hold the top jobs. When moneymen held them, money was lost. I'm not saying editors are better *people* than businessmen. I'm just saying they are better editors. If you want high-quality editorial content, then you have to leave editors and writers alone to scratch one another's eyes out.

What I've arrived at here is the recipe for ice. Without ice, the lemonade will always be warm. A martini will be unthinkable. **NR**

The Bigger They Come...

ANTHONY LEJEUNE

The Rise and Fall of the Soviet Empire, by Brian Crozier (Forum, 829 pp., $35)

To recount within a single volume the whole history of a global empire, even a relatively short-lived one, must entail cursory treatment of its individual parts and phases. Large books have been written about aspects of the Soviet expansion and assault on the non-Communist world to which Brian Crozier, in this impressively wide-ranging overview, allows only two or three pages. Such topics include not only the big clashes—Korea, Vietnam—but shameful smaller stories, such as the betrayal of Mihailovich and Western gullibility over the Katyn massacre.

What the sweep of Crozier's text brings out most clearly is how real the

The Board of Directors of the
Mont Pelerin Society
Announces the
Friedrich A. Hayek Fellowships
for the
2000 GENERAL MEETING OF
THE MONT PELERIN SOCIETY
(Santiago, Chile—November 12–18, 2000)

"The more I learn about the evolution of ideas, the more I have become aware that I am simply an unrepentant Old Whig — with the stress on the 'old'."
F. A. Hayek, "Why I am not a Conservative,"
***The Constitution of Liberty* (1960)**

The President of the Mont Pelerin Society, Dr. Rámon Díaz, notes that students of Hayek cannot ignore the single definition of his political philosophy which Hayek bequeathed to us. What can we learn from Hayek's self-definition as an Old Whig? With what values did he identify and reject by it? Is there any alternative definition more accessible to the general public?

The Hayek Fellowships will be awarded for the three best essays on the above topic. Essays of 5,000 words or less may be submitted by students or faculty members 35 years of age or younger. The essays will be judged by an international panel of three senior members of the Society. The deadline for submission of essays is May 31, 2000.

Prize information and additional details are available from:
The Mont Pelerin Society, P.O. Box 7031,
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Soviet empire was. Lenin may have conceived it originally in ideological terms as a secular Catholicism with the Kremlin as its Vatican. But centralized power very soon became the primary goal, and his successors, Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev, pursued an imperial strategy in the most brutal and unambiguous way. Stalin's supposedly limited ambition, "socialism in one country," was never more than a piety for external consumption, as trustworthy as Hitler's pledge that he had "no more territorial ambitions." "Peaceful co-existence," as defined by Khrushchev, meant "the intensification of the international class struggle." The Brezhnev Doctrine claimed the Soviet Union's right to intervene in the affairs of any Communist country that moved "in the direction of the restoration of the capitalist system."

And it was indeed an evil empire. As one of his many activities in the fight against it—countering misinformation was a large part of his role—Brian Crozier for twelve years wrote the "Protracted Conflict" column in NATIONAL REVIEW, a post he took over from another brave fighter, James Burnham. Along with Robert Conquest, who first revealed the enormity of Stalin's death toll, Burnham and Crozier did as much as anyone to alert Anglo-American opinion. The mere figures are still hard to grasp. Recent research, carried out by a group of scholars in France and quoted in this book, puts the total number of deaths directly attributable to Communist rule in various countries at between 85 and 100 million. Other estimates have been considerably higher. Nazi Germany killed only 25 million—but since Hitler was a National Socialist and Mussolini a kind of Marxist, their butcherer's bills should perhaps be added to, rather than compared with, the total that can be laid at socialism's door.

For those who lived through the period described, those at least who were not too blinkered and were to some degree aware of what was going on, Crozier's account probably offers little new. The young should certainly read it, but they may not feel enticed. Being so broad and therefore thin, it is, like toast, somewhat dry: 515 pages of text supported by 276 pages of notes and appendices. Issues that could be debated interestingly at length (the facts are generally indisputable) receive barely a glance.

There is plenty that deserves any reader's attention, however. The willful blindness of the West, now so eagerly

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The willful blindness of the West, now so easily forgotten or excused, holds a lesson meriting repetition.

■

forgotten or excused, holds a lesson meriting constant repetition. Organizations such as the World Peace Council and the World Federation of Trade Unions, taken seriously by a multitude of well-meaning people, were always puppets of the Soviet Union. Incredibly, Churchill and Roosevelt during the Second World War seem to have regarded Stalin not simply as the devil on their side, which would have been reasonable though rash, but as being sincere in his peace-loving democratic protestations. Churchill was persuaded to switch support from Mihailovich to Tito in Yugoslavia largely because of misinformation fed to him through a known Communist in the Special Operations Executive. As late as the 1970s, the British Foreign Office still refused to admit that it was the Russians, not the Germans, who murdered 4,421 Polish officers at Katyn (and some 17,000 other class-enemies elsewhere in Poland). Pressure was also brought to bear on the Church of England not to allow a memorial in a London church that would have named the dead of Katyn as victims of Communism—pressure, needless to say, to which the wretched clergy succumbed.

Jean Lacouture, a well-known French journalist of leftish persuasion, visited Phnom Penh shortly after the massacre that wiped out 20 percent of the entire population of Cambodia; he described the Khmer Rouge as "Marxists of high quality." Some years later he confessed his mistake and apologized. This makes him almost unique. Very few of Stalin's former admirers in the West have uttered a word of apology. Universities throughout America and Britain today are full of unabashed Marxists and ex-Communists, whereas even the most repentant ex-Fascist would be shunned. Professor Eric Hobsbawm, a veteran economist who has remained loyal to the Communist party of Great Britain, was given the Order of Merit by Tony Blair's Labour government in 1998.

While liberals snarl at the aged Pinochet, who saved Chile from becoming another Cuba, former Communists have slipped quietly back into positions of power throughout much of Eastern Europe. The Communist rulers of China, where untold numbers of people are still being imprisoned or killed for opposition to Peking's empire, receive a polite welcome in the capitals of the West. A terrifying amount of Marxism remains in the world's bloodstream. Many Third World governments are openly committed to its doctrine; elsewhere, Communist parties have changed their names but not their ambitions. The building of empires, Churchill said, is often accompanied by much suffering; their dissolution, always. Evil empires are no exception, as the inhabitants of Chechnya can testify. What the new, rearming, KGB-backed regime in Russia may portend, nobody knows.

Crozier's conclusions are not particularly optimistic. The Soviet Union, he says, lost the struggle, but the West did not win it; it was not able, that is, to impose conditions or reform the institutions of its defeated enemy, as it did in Germany and Japan, let alone expunge Marxist doctrine. "The Soviet Empire," he says, "had collapsed. But the rise of another Communist Empire cannot be ruled out." Meanwhile, however, the champions of freedom, among whom Brian Crozier is not least, are surely entitled to recall the epic drama with some pride. **NR**

Mr. Lejeune is a contributing editor of NATIONAL REVIEW.

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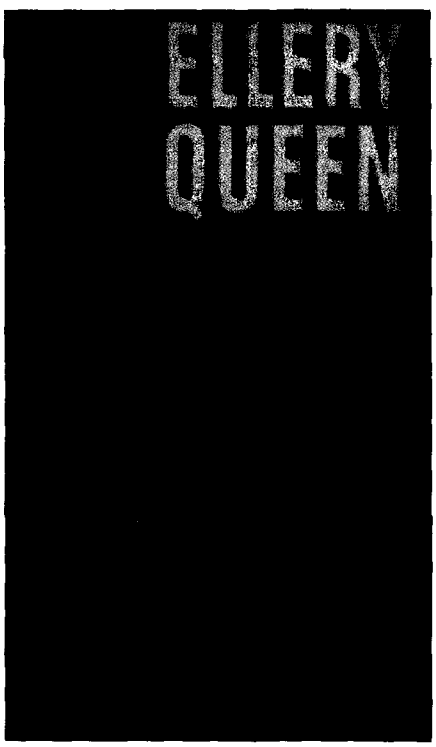
■ ESSAY ■

Mystery Men

S. T. KARNICK

THE fact that hardly anybody reads Ellery Queen today indicates the depths to which American mystery fiction has fallen, and the cultural politics that have afflicted it. The genre's attempts to plunder the commercial strengths of science fiction and horror have only corrupted it, replacing order and reason with ideology and sensationalism. Queen, by contrast, represented above all a love for mysteries, and through that a passion for truth. Thus



his decline, and that of the traditional American mystery, in this time of widespread belief that there are no real truths.

The first Ellery Queen novel, *The Roman Hat Mystery*, appeared 70 years ago, and it's no exaggeration to say that Queen set the standard and form of the modern American crime story. Yet the anniversary passed with little fanfare. *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* dedicated an issue to its founder and namesake, and a small publisher released the outline of a final, unpublished Queen novel and other oddments, but that was about it. Almost none of Queen's books is now in print, and the few that are, are very hard to find. This is a shame. Ellery Queen was the single most important figure of the Golden Age of the American mystery, which ran from the 1930s through the '50s. Ellery Queen, as critic Anthony Boucher put it, *is* the American detective story.

■

Ellery Queen represented above all a love for mysteries, and through that a passion for truth.

■

Actually, Queen was a pair of young Manhattan ad-men, cousins Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, whose first novel was composed for a mystery-writing contest. They showed ingenuity and foresight in using their detective's name as nom de plume, thereby giving readers only one name to remember, and the series became immediately popular. Their books have sold over 100 million copies. Between 1929 and Lee's death in 1971, they wrote 39 novels, hundreds of short stories, and countless radio scripts and film treatments. Lee typically wrote the books and stories following detailed outlines (often more than a hundred pages) created by Dannay, who formulated the plots, puzzles, characters, and themes. And though their early novels were clearly influenced by S. S. Van Dine's Philo Vance books and built on a solid tradition including Doyle, Chesterton, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Earl Derr Biggers, and Melville Davisson Post, they combined these influences in a unique way that set the standard for the Golden Age of mysteries.

Before Queen, there were two distinct types of crime fiction in the U.S.: the puzzle mystery and the hard-boiled story.

Mr. Karnick is editor-in-chief of the Hudson Institute's magazine, *American Outlook*.

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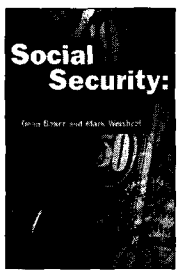

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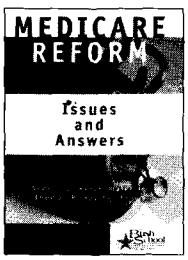

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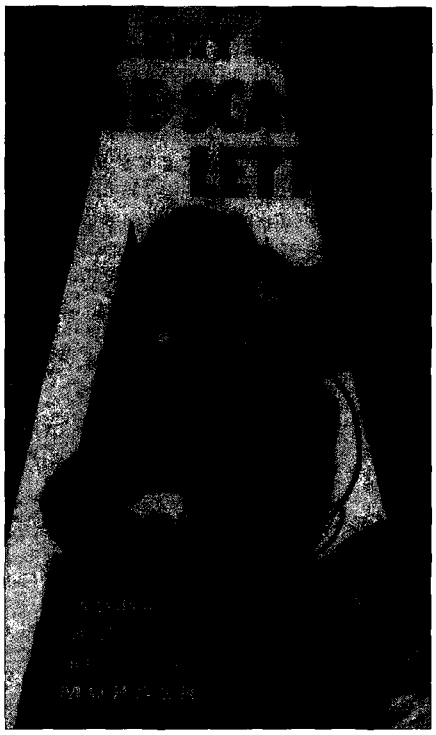
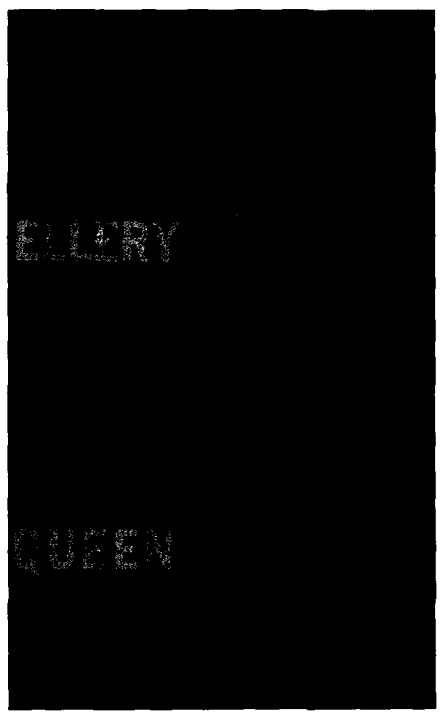


The puzzle form began with Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in 1841 and was the dominant type of crime fiction until the late 1920s. These mysteries typically have a limited group of suspects and a detective who reasons out the solution based on observation and knowledge of human nature. The author "plays fair" with the reader, supplying all the clues necessary to solve the mystery before the detective reveals the answer.

The hard-boiled style started in the pulp magazines of the 1920s and tried to reflect seamier aspects of American life. The typical protagonist was a loner who lived by a strict but highly idiosyncratic moral code and outlasted the (often corrupt) police, power brokers, and criminal class to bring a small measure of justice to the weak and unprotected. Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade, Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe, and Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer are among the best-known hard-boiled detectives. Whereas puzzle mysteries tended toward conservatism in their depiction of a rational world in which justice is possible, the hard-boiled form was popular among liberals for its intimation that American society was essentially unjust (and thus ripe for political change).

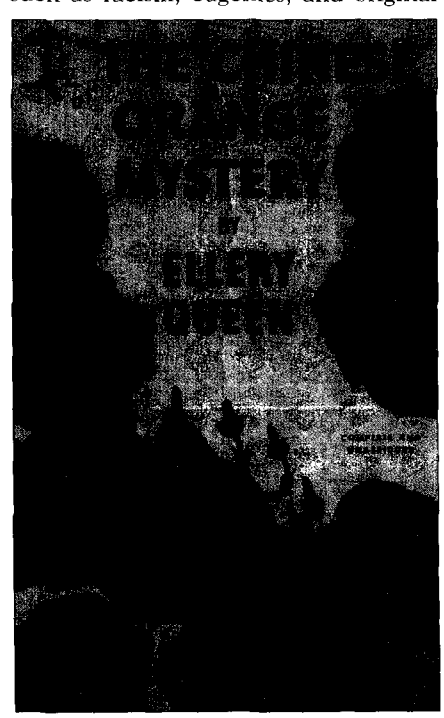
Queen's innovation was to give the puzzle mystery an infusion of reality from the nascent hard-boiled form. This is particularly evident in the main characters of the series. Ellery is the classic amateur detective, à la Philo Vance—an intellectual snob who wears a pince-nez—but his connection to the police is plausible, for his father is Inspector Richard Queen of the NYPD. Queen *père* is wise, decent, and dedicated, and their relationship is affectionate, mutually respectful, and reasonably complex. Inspector Queen's assistant, Sergeant Velie, is a stolid, trustworthy cop. This was quite a contrast to Sherlock Holmes's humorous contempt toward Scotland Yard, an attitude which had become rampant in the genre by the 1920s.

Queen soon dropped the Vance affectations, and the series became a perfect fusion of the puzzle mystery with the rising realism and toughness of the hard-boiled story. One can even see the roots of the police procedural (still a staple of the genre, as evident in Ed McBain's continuing popularity) in *Roman Hat*, much of which is devoted to a detailed description of the NYPD's investigation of a murder in a Broadway theater. Like a police investigator, Queen arrived at his solutions through meticulous logical deduction from empirical evidence, rather than intuition or psychological insights. Dannay created the genre's most complex puzzles and fairly presented all the clues, even stating explicitly when Ellery and the reader had enough information to solve the riddle. Of course, only geniuses needed apply, but that was part of the fun.



Queen's influence is hard to overestimate. *Roman Hat* and its successors established what quickly became known as the "traditional" American mystery (rather ironically, given its newness). Immensely popular authors such as Rex Stout (creator of Nero Wolfe), Cornell Woolrich, Erle Stanley Gardner, and Craig Rice (FDR's favorite) quickly created their own variations on Queen's fusion of toughness and intellect. Even Dashiell Hammett, the most prestigious of hard-boiled authors, tried it, with his last and most likable novel, *The Thin Man*, from 1934. And Dannay began a long, influential career as critic, editor, historian, and anthologist, tirelessly promoting the genre, establishing its pedigrees and clarifying its history, finding and championing new authors (such as Jorge Luis Borges, whom he was the first American editor to publish), and bringing the new tradition to radio, film, and eventually television.

Perhaps most importantly, Dannay restlessly sought innovations in his own fiction. Queen quickly became a pioneer in the use of religious motifs, complex character relationships, black humor, and ambitious subject matter such as racism, eugenics, and original



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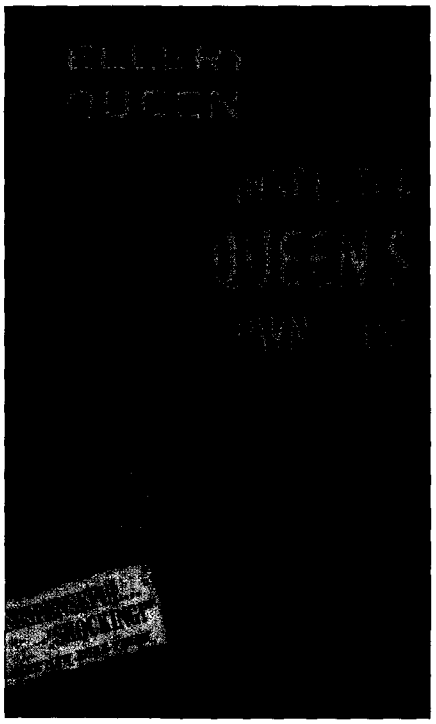

sin. No less important was the great detective's emotional attachment to his cases, another characteristic incorporated from hard-boiled fiction. In some of the books, notably *Ten Days' Wonder* (1948) and *Cat of Many Tails* (1949), Ellery's actions cause additional deaths, and his anguish over his presumption and intellectual arrogance gives these stories additional depth and lasting interest.

Cat of Many Tails, concerning the strangulation murders of six people during a hot summer in New York City, shows the amount of action, psychological insight, and social observation Queen brought to the puzzle mystery. While Ellery and his father try to discern the pattern behind the murders and identify the killer, sensational newspaper and radio coverage whips the public into a frenzy, vigilante groups rise up, and the city bursts into lethal riots. After an exhaustive police investigation and some bravura reasoning by Ellery, the police set a trap for the killer, but before Ellery realizes that they have captured the wrong person, more deaths occur. Ellery resolves to quit his "glorious career of [bumbling] masquerading as exact and omnipotent science," but a wise professor dissuades him, avowing that the "great and true lesson" the detective should learn from the story is, quoting from the Gospel of Mark, "There is one God; and there is none other but He."

Ellery's initial unquestioning belief in rationalism is undermined and ultimately destroyed in these middle-period fictions, especially the novelette "The Lamp of God" and the Wrightsville mysteries set in a fairly typical American hamlet, of which 1942's *Calamity Town* is a classic. Although Queen's devotion to the puzzle sometimes hindered character development and philosophical depth, his best books meticulously explored the limits of human ingenuity and free will. As critic Francis Nevins Jr. noted of Queen's *Tragedy of Y*, "Although rooted in a genre that has traditionally been oriented to reason, order, and optimism, Y evokes depths of tragic despair that are virtually without parallel in the history of crime fiction."

The hubris behind these tragedies is humanism, especially the notion that people can create valid moral systems without God, which Dannay saw as the great danger in reason divorced from religious faith. Queen's fiction makes it clear that this is exactly what we too are meant to learn. The Nietzschean manipulator who considers himself above conventional morality is a common element, and the amount and intent of the religious imagery throughout the series are undeniable. Though Nevins and others have tried hard to explain away these attributes, Dannay made his intentions very clear, stating, for example, that he conceived 1964's *And on the Eighth Day* after reading about the Dead Sea Scrolls and noting their parallels to the Gospels. Queen's religious themes remind us that popular, escapist fiction can be meaningful while it entertains, and his writings merit a revival and serious reassessment. Such a revival might also be our best hope for a renewal of the genre that Frederic Dannay and Manfred Lee did so much to build and sustain. **NR**

Queen's innovation was to give the puzzle mystery an infusion of reality from the nascent hard-boiled form.

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■ CITY DESK ■

Second Acts

RICHARD BROOKHISER

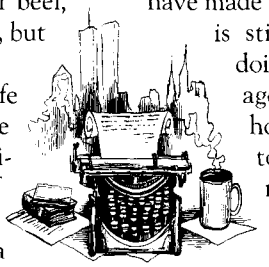
WHAT do New Yorkers do when *they are weary of life?* They get another. Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, wrote Robert Frost, as if it were a one-time experience. Roads are diverging in Midtown every week.

My trainer, S, told me about the dilemma of another client of his, a designer, who had a multi-million-dollar deal with a conservative label. Now he is walking away from it because, as he put it, he couldn't distinguish between the four shades of kelly green. What to do? He thinks maybe he'll buy a farm in Brazil—not to harvest rubber or beef, or whatever Brazilian farmers do, but just for a change of scene.

This is the diaphanous play-life of the truly successful; but more normal New Yorkers make similarly drastic changes. S himself has just made his second career three-point turn. Before he was a trainer, he was an engineer in the Sunbelt. Needing a change of pace, he moved to New York and engineered bodies. Just this millennium, he switched again, to running the technical side of the computer-education program at a Manhattan college. The man who told me to work out in tank-top T-shirts so he could better monitor my delts now wears a charcoal gray suit. He is an awesome sight. I had always imagined that a high percentage of the trainers at the gym were debt collectors. S now looks as if he collects debt at a much higher level—say, in former Soviet republics.

S's new line of work makes him a cause of transformation in others. Many of the students in his department are adults, learning their cyber ABC's before they get left at the stage of stone axes; or they are already geeks, sent by their companies to bone up on Windows 2000.2, before Windows 2000.3 becomes available, then ubiquitous, then antique. Teachers of computer skills are like priests: They specialize in resurrections.

After a two-year lapse, I ran into J. He was the publicist for one of my biographies, and he was the perfect publicist: imaginative, extroverted, indefatigable. If J had been in Philadelphia in 1787, everyone would know that Gouverneur Morris drafted the Constitution. J could have made Morris *huge*. He told me he is still in the book business, doing a little publicity, a little agenting, whatever. But his horsepower is now harnessed to a workshop for writing musicals. With the success of *Rent*, this artistic valley of death is suddenly showing shoots. Maybe Broadway can be something more than an echo chamber of revivals, in which *Show Boat*'s noble Negroes and *Cabaret*'s Weimar degenerates comprise a weird collective past, transposed into an even weirder eternal present.



J knows that the odds against him, and against his chosen line of work, are long. The man he holds responsible for the desiccation of the genre is Stephen Sondheim. But isn't Sondheim, I asked, its last successful practitioner? (It went without saying that we dismissed Andrew Lloyd Webber.) No, J insisted: Sondheim choked the musical with ambition. Dry, clever scores; too-clever words; bizarre themes: demon barbers, presidential assassins, Georges Seurat. Whatever happened to boy meets girl? J's current project is a show based on a screwball comedy, but he says it would be easier to get backing for a show about the Armenian genocide. I can see it now: the Ottomans' Chorus—"Too Many Shopkeepers"; the Love Song—"Boy Meets Turk." J is better off with dizzy blondes.

Finally, Rabbi M. When he was a seminarian, he taught my 10-year-old future wife Hebrew. Now, 40 years later, he works at an Episcopal church in Midtown, running a center on interfaith dialogue. Once upon a time that would have meant a minister, a priest, and a rabbi leading a discussion on world peace. The Neapolitan ice-cream flavors of the '50s survive in the setups of creaky jokes. But, with the decline of some religions, the growth (and radicalization) of others, and the emergence of new ones, Rabbi M's assignment becomes much more complex. It becomes a harder sell, too. When you can walk down the street on lunch hour and be accosted by people who think the Savior was black, or that He was the last Lubavitcher Rebbe, why would you feel the need to go to a church for interfaith dialogue? Rabbi M will do his considerable best.

■

My personal trainer has just made his second career three-point turn.

■

Come the global economy, job turbulence will be the way of the world, or so its prophets assure us. In a big city, where each assembly district is the equivalent of a good-sized town, the process is easier to study. Every day, insects are going through the life cycle, but when the 17-year locusts emerge, you notice.

What is the tangible marker of urban/modern career mobility? Cemeteries. In small towns and pastoral poems, the dead are nearby. "Each in his narrow cell forever laid, / The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep." They sleep there because they never moved away; life in the hamlet was a cell, too. New Yorkers move here and away, and move in and out of lives in between. When they die, they go to bursting parking lots in the outer boroughs. Or if they were buried in Manhattan, they are simply gone, built over. Somebody needed the land. **NR**

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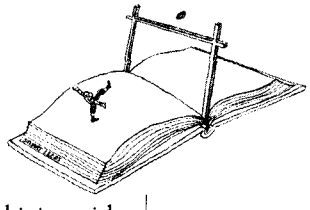
■ FILM ■

Leo's Spring Break

JOHN SIMON

SUPPOSEDLY about "escape from the digital world," ***The Beach*** is less a film than a computer game by and for drugged-out teenagers. (If, as he said he will, Gene Shalit steals this line, remember it originated here.) Plot, characterization, and dialogue are all perfectly juvenile and no less improbable. But this marks Leonardo DiCaprio's long-awaited post-*Titanic* debut, and so guarantees a panting teenage audience, drugged-out or not. Based on a best-selling novel by Alex Garland, the film reunites the director and scenarist of *Trainspotting*, Danny Boyle and John Hodge.

Richard (DiCaprio) is a young man apparently fleeing our civilization, which is all we are given by way of his history, motivation, and characterization. We meet him checking into a cheap hotel in Bangkok, where cheap hotels truly live up to that designation. In the middle of the night, he is awakened by an absurd shouted monologue from the corridor, which no one interrupts. Soon the shouter (Robert Carlyle), now in the adjoining room, tears a hole in the mosquito netting that is the upper part of the dividing wall. After a few rudenesses, the middle-aged freak, who calls himself Daffy Duck, proceeds to share a king-sized joint with Richard, and reveals himself a returnee from a small, secret paradisiac island that cannot be found without a map on his person.



Next morning, Richard discovers Daffy dead in his room, his wrists slashed. There is enough blood everywhere for a herd of cattle to have been sloppily slaughtered there—the movie does nothing by halves. But Daffy has left Richard his precious map, and, joined by a pair of young French lovers, Etienne and Françoise, Richard sets out for paradise. This turns out to be a crescent-shaped island, inviting and fully visible from a neighboring larger one, possibly even from the mainland. It proves accessible by swimming to our plucky trio, and makes you wonder why a map was required, granted that Etienne thinks he spotted an ominous fin in the waters.

On the island, the threesome runs into a ferocious bunch of heavily armed natives, whom, however, they manage to elude. These ignoble savages, it turns out later, are led by a dope farmer who tolerates the present commune of some 30 or 40 Western hippies, but will hunt down any new arrivals. Otherwise, the island is Edenic, with marijuana growing all over, lushly wooded hills, and a scenic waterfall cascading into a crystalline lagoon full of fish ready for the spearing. On a high ledge above, the boys hesitate, but when Françoise jauntily dives in, they cannot but follow.

■

The plot, characterization, and dialogue of *The Beach* are all perfectly juvenile and no less improbable.

■

Soon they are amid the commune of fellow escapees from digital (or any other) civilization, who pass their time blissfully dancing on the pristine beach, strumming guitars, or playing such games as repeating a silly phrase set by a Croatian hippie in his native tongue. The commune, you see, is multinational, which would suggest many maps circulating around the world. There is, though, not much sex on view, and what there is is mostly toned down to the age level of your typical DiCaprio fan.

The commune is governed by Sal, played by the frightening Tilda Swinton, who has the ghostly coloring of a Weimaraner, and the icy stare of a sadistic English scoutmistress. In due time, Richard fights a heroic battle against a harmless-looking baby shark, is seduced by the adorable Françoise (Virginie

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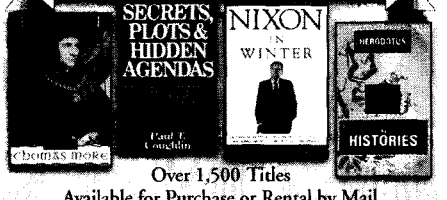

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Ledoyen) without too much opposition from the less toothsome, somewhat scruffy-looking Etienne (Guillaume Canet), and catches the coldly lustful eye of Sal.

The happy colony is well supplied with all amenities because a couple of them periodically sail to the mainland to purchase whatever, from tampons to cigarettes, is needed in paradise, without arousing the mainlanders' suspicions. Conversely, when someone badly needs medical help, he is not allowed to seek the mainland, lest the island become overrun by non-mapholders. So an occasional island death from illness or shark bite is conveniently overlooked by the rest.

But trouble begins when Sal takes Richard along on the mainland shopping tour and promptly gets him to service her. Later, Françoise mysteriously finds out and, in a very bourgeois dudgeon, dumps him. Forthwith, things go bad for everybody, as inferior mainland hippies to whom Richard gave the map invade paradise, the dope chief decides to exterminate all whites, and so, unamiably, on. There is, nevertheless, a happy ending as Richard, back in civilization, is reunited with a computer on which he receives an e-mail message from his admittedly absent Françoise that heartens him with an allusion to the parallel universes about which they discoursed in the rosy past. Fortified, he returns to his computer game.

DiCaprio has evolved a more mature head and more muscular physique, but whether that increases his charm remains for the box office to determine. Virginie Ledoyen is as lovable in English as she was in French, but loses something in the transition from girl to woman. To make paradise more photogenic, the filmmakers had to import 100 coconut palms and flatten out some obtrusive dunes, but they are no flatter, I'm sure, than the rest of this shallow movie.

■ In vivid contrast to this debacle stands ***Not One Less***, by the leading Chinese filmmaker Zhang Yimou. Though he has lost his gorgeous companion and star, Gong Li, his art is undiminished, as this film, despite its ungrammatical English title, proves.

It is the story of Wei Minzhi, a 13-year-old girl recruited as a substitute for a backwoods primary-school teacher given a month-long emergency leave to tend to his gravely ill mother. No one else would undertake this thankless job, and Wei is at first intimidated by her 28 prospective wards and her own youthful inexperience. But she desperately needs the fee: 50 yuan, plus, if none of the kids defects as some already have, ten yuan more. Hence the title, which ought to be "Not One Fewer," although *Not One Less* has a better ring.

How this simple village girl, scarcely older than her pupils and under dire circumstances—the school is so poor that even chalk is stringently rationed—makes a go of it is both absorbing and profoundly moving. Peasant stubbornness translates itself into pedagogic ingenuity, and the great need for those 60 yuan spurs Wei to almost superhuman feats of endurance and canniness. Everyone in the cast is an amateur and, in Zhang's masterstroke, plays a role identical with or close to his real-life status. Everybody also retains his real-life name, and a good deal of the film was improvised.

■

Not One Less is almost indescribably touching, and crowned by an irresistible performance from Wei Minzhi.

■

Just when things begin to go smoothly for Wei, the little student troublemaker, whom she managed to tame, is sent off to the big city by his sick, widowed, and destitute mother to earn money toward paying off her creditors. Wei resolves to retrieve the boy for those extra ten yuan, though she doesn't even have the money for the bus fare to the distant and scary city she has never seen.

What happens from then on is almost indescribably touching, but also, like the rest of the film, not devoid of humor, and crowned by an irresistible performance from the slightly stolid, but all the more gripping, Wei Minzhi. If you miss this marvelously written, directed, acted, and shot film, you will cheat yourself out of a good deal more than 60 yuan. **NR**

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WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY JR.

They Also Serve . . .

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 11

In the late winter of 1995 Steve Forbes came to see me. He wished to advise me that Jack Kemp's decision not to seek the Republican nomination in 1996 left a hole in the political strategy of Empower America, the think group in which he and Kemp and Jeane Kirkpatrick were active. He was considering, he said, putting his own name up as candidate, and wished to tell me about it in deference to whatever seniority I had, as an old conservative hand.

He must have read the surprise I registered. I began to talk about what I thought were his special difficulties. He interrupted me—"I know I know I know. I talked to Bob Bartley [the *Wall Street Journal*'s editor] yesterday and he started to say exactly the same thing, so I'll say it and save you the trouble. 1) I've never run for political office; 2) I'm a graduate of Princeton; 3) I inherited a business from my father, as also a private fortune." He paused for a moment. "All I'm asking is that I be allowed to fall on my ass on my own."

Well, nobody could stop him and nobody did. But his failure is more a statistical defeat than a strategic defeat, because it was now possible, largely owing to his initiative, to support radical, yes radical, reforms. Principal among these, of course, is his signature call for a flat income tax. We aren't about to get one, even if Alan Keyes is elected president. But to make the idea thinkable is a significant step forward. Milton Friedman proposed the flat tax 40 years ago; I in a book in 1973. Congressman Dick Armey was toying with the idea in 1996; but among presidential candidates, the actual words were framed by Steve Forbes's lips.

And it was he who most strenuously emphasized the desirability of allowing reforms in Social Security. "We are all in favor of the Social Security program," Mark Shields remarked at a recent panel, eliciting from me the same answer Steve Forbes would have given: "I am in favor of Social Security, and against the Social Security program." Forbes would amend the program to allow for individual investments by participants. This would add to the capital pool and return to the investor a higher figure than he'll get back from government IOUs.

But did he, as expressed in his withdrawal speech, "transform the political landscape?" It is safer to say that he did everything in his power to do so. The great political ice ages that churn up their own divinities (equality) and hobgoblins (vouchers) are difficult to stay. But then occasionally in history it seems to work. Yeltsin stood up against the Soviet tank in 1991, and prevailed, even as the student who tried the same thing in Tiananmen Square failed. There are too many interests that stand in the way of a flat tax to justify the assumption that the idea has actually gestated, thanks to Mr. Forbes. But at least one can say that what was once merely textbook paradigm is now something tried out in political palaver, in the villages of Iowa and New Hampshire, bringing not mass conversions, but respectful attention.

Mr. Forbes might have added to the negative recitation of his personal history, that he was born without charisma. But the last two months spare everyone from the delusion that mere eloquence moves mountains. There they were, Forbes, Bush, McCain, Bauer, Hatch, and Keyes. Alan Keyes is about as eloquent as a political contender can be, whose burden is to answer all questions in one minute or less. If Forbes had been born with the tongue of Cato, he might have moved his New Hampshire vote from 13 percent to 15.

American conservatives will anxiously look to Steve Forbes and weigh his advice on the best political candidate among the survivors. They might take his advice, and might ignore it: It is classically difficult to pass along personal constituencies. But one hopes that his heroic effort will inspire even if his programs do not. He spent four and one-half years speaking to everybody everywhere, visibly against the tug of his own reclusive inclinations. He invested a life's savings in the effort, chose his words carefully, made no concessions except perhaps for his repeal of the law that there is no free lunch—there was a free lunch, in Candidate Forbes's tent.

The old hands salute him.

Badmouthing Capital Punishment

NEW YORK, JANUARY 25

It is becoming fashionable to focus on Gov. Bush as something of a Lord High Executioner. The lobby opposed to capital punishment never rests, which is fair enough. And it is true that George W. Bush favors capital punishment. True, also, that while he has served as governor, 117 people have been executed in Texas. But some of the questions posed to him, some directly, some indirectly, are formulated as if his hand were gladly on the needle every time an execution takes place. What he answers, simply, should be reasonable enough: "That is the law." Some years ago Gov. Hugh Carey of New York, adamantly opposed to capital punishment, declared to the legislature in Albany, which had scheduled a return of capital punishment and had amassed a vote large enough to override the gubernatorial veto, that if the law were passed he would simply grant an executive pardon to every person sentenced to death. Perhaps some such posture was expected of Bush. But Carey was defying the law and making a travesty of executive power. Bush is executing the law.

The arguments don't rest, simply, with the matter of Yes or No on capital punishment. The opponents make their splashy way in dispatches, especially in Europe, which likes to think of the United States as morally primitive, even if occasionally useful in bailing out Europe.

A pretty lurid example of the toothgnashers' behavior comes in a dispatch from *Slate* magazine, a report on European sentiment by Alexander Chancellor. He wastes no time. "With the death penalty outlawed throughout the European Union and its abolition a requirement for any country seeking to join, European newspapers have been increasingly focused, with horror and bewilderment, on the overwhelming support for capital punishment that continues to exist in the United States. The *Guardian* of London led its international section Thursday with the headline, 'Bush leads charge of death brigade.' "

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But now we turn a dramatic page with a letter circulating in Europe, written (allegedly) by Billy G. Hughes. He is a convicted murderer who was executed Monday night. How did this letter receive European circulation? According to *La Repubblica*, it did so "through the good offices of the invisible and courageous network of militants against the death penalty."

What did the letter say? "A week to ten days before their deaths, they have all their personal possessions removed, are allowed no books or other reading matter, [and] are prevented from watching television."

Now this charge is so grotesque as to be, on the face of it, unbelievable. My inclination was to bring attention to it without personally documenting its falsity. But one does one's duty, and so I spoke with Mr. Larry Todd, who is the spokesman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The business about being deprived of books and magazines and newspapers is an invention. The prisoners are removed to the execution quarter about six hours before the critical moment. That time is habitually spent with family, friends, and counselors. A telephone is at the disposal of the condemned, as also a radio.

Any documentation of the last hours of someone facing clinically imposed death is inherently macabre. But worth here inquiring into because it is one thing to approve of capital punishment for murderers, quite another to sanction sadistic background noises. Even if it can be persuasively maintained that a condemned prisoner hardly notices if he is deprived also of the morning paper, depriving him of it—if he asks for it—is brutal in a sense that capital punishment, which is an apocalyptic formality, is not.

The argument will go on forever. Although there are credible arguments that capital punishment deters the marginal murderer, it is not proved. Nor is it disproved. We are left in the unanswerable quandary posed by Prof. Ernest van den Haag years ago in his book on capital punishment. A judge, at sentencing time of the convicted murderer, must say to himself: If capital punishment does not in fact deter, and I sentence this man to the chair, I am executing only a convicted murderer. If in fact capital punishment *does* deter, and I fail to execute this man, then I am responsible for the death of an innocent person whose life might have been spared if I had sent the murderer to death. That reasoning has not been explored by the editors of the *Guardian* or those others who think American criminal justice aberrant and savage.

The Conservative Movement Dead?

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 4

WILLIAM KRISTOL, the conservative leader who is the editor and publisher of the prestigious *Weekly Standard*, on the Wednesday after the New Hampshire vote pronounced the conservative movement dead. He did the autopsy by adding up the percentages achieved by the three "movement conservatives" in the primary. They were, of course, Steve Forbes, who got 13 percent of the vote, Alan Keyes, who got 6 percent, and Gary Bauer, who struck out with 1 percent. Add that up and, as Mr. Kristol points out, you have 20 percent of the whole. "The conservative movement," he wrote in the *Washington Post*, "which accomplished great things over the past quarter-century, is finished."

The statement, given its provenance, deserves respectful attention. But an analysis of it should begin with the examination of the data at hand, as assembled in New Hampshire.

Gary Bauer was fading into insignificance as voters acknowledged that his campaign was educational in character. Much the same is correctly said about Alan Keyes. Keyes's showing was something of a personal tribute. He had no money to spend, only his voice, manner, and eloquence to retail. And at the end of the campaign he had become a familiar figure only because he participated in all the debates and gleefully gave interviews to anyone who would listen. But no movement would ever develop around a black radical who treats anybody who believes in the right to abort a fetus as a criminal, pure and simple. Steve Forbes's showing was miserable in the context of his claims for himself and his candidacy. Right through to the final moments of the primary he was saying that the voters would hear his call to principled reforms and elect him president. Up to a point, confidence of that kind is understandable. For the rest of democratic time, the winner of presidential nominating campaigns will be introduced to the convention that nominated him as "the next president of the United States."

In the rhetoric of celebration, that kind of thing is to be expected. But when used as methodically as it was used by Steve Forbes, the impression he gave was of serious hallucination. Asked whether he and candidate George W. Bush would work together in the days ahead, he found himself saying, two days before the vote, that he was certain there would be room in his administration for George W. Bush. His refusal to use the subjunctive mood ("If I am elected, I would . . ."), clinging to the historical, declamatory tense ("When I am elected, I will . . ."), contributed to a loss of patience by voters who, however attracted they may have been by the platform of Mr. Forbes, began to wonder about the vision of its advocate spokesman. There are those who damage a cause by their espousal of it. If you can't play the piano (I've learned), you should stop performing. There is plenty Mr. Forbes can do to advance his cause without talking about who he will appoint to what position when he achieves the White House.

The examination does not by itself invalidate Kristol's summary judgment. If Bauer and Keyes had bowed out in favor of Forbes, and if Forbes had developed the histrionic powers of Ronald Reagan, he probably would still have lost out to McCain and Bush. But the perspective invoked by Kristol would be sharper.

And we saw, the very first day after Bush was humiliated, the direction he chose to take. In a single appearance in South Carolina he seven times, using the word, declared himself a conservative. And the challenger, John McCain, will predictably woo the conservative vote, notwithstanding Kristol's assumption that it is old and moribund. Returning one night from a television studio, one year before he became president, Richard Nixon said to me, "I discovered in 1962 that you can't win with just the conservative vote. But you can't win without it."

It will almost certainly prove, in the weeks ahead, that the conservative legions are perhaps inattentive, but not inert. The failure of both Bush and McCain is to advance one position on which they are willing to stand or fall, surely the best being, in this day, the need to repeal the misinterpretation of the First Amendment, to permit parents to send their children to schools they want to patronize. The easy way out is to say that reform lies in the hands of the Supreme Court. The arresting alternative is to say that the Supreme Court needs sophisticated instruction. Many hopefully predict that, in such circumstances, the revival Mr. Kristol despairs of, would be there—joy to the world!

—UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

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■ THE MISANTHROPE'S CORNER ■

FLORENCE KING

JOHN MCCAIN got stuck in a verbal tar pit in his recent attempt to paint himself as a blasé man of the world. Ironically, it began on his campaign bus, the "Straight Talk Express," and continued in a store selling extra-sharp cheese.

Asked about gays in the military, he stated in his modestly boastful way that he had served with many in the Navy, though he had never discussed the subject with them. He probably thought this proved that "don't ask, don't tell" works, but there was a slight problem: McCain was in the Navy back when gays were barred from the military and faced instant dismissal if exposed. Naturally they never discussed it with him.

That being the case, the reporter shot back, how did McCain know they were gay?

It was a Biblical moment, recalling the world's first Gotcha! question: "Who told you that you were naked?" It's not hard to imagine the sensation that must have slammed through him. Since we're recalling notable moments in gardens, we can go with Emily Dickinson's "zero at the bone" on seeing a snake in hers.

McCain had three choices: He could say his gay shipmates told him they were gay, which would have contradicted his original statement; he could say he found them in flagrante and failed to report them; or he could say he "just knew."

With no choice but the last, he lumbered into a wordy answer about recognizing "by behavior and by attitudes," whereupon gay spokesmen issued their usual condemnation of stereotyping. Their reaction was fairly tepid as these things go, but McCain panicked and made another statement, explaining that he had merely had "suspicions" about certain shipmates, and that someone else had told him they were gay.

Two days later, he went before Katie Couric in the obligatory clarification rite, explaining that a fellow officer had indeed confessed his homosexuality to him, but only after leaving the Navy.

For some reason I have trouble visualizing this heart-to-heart. I think he made the whole thing up and never served with any gays, real or suspected, and furthermore I don't care.

What bothers me about this incident is what our fear of stereotyping is doing to the qualities of insight, perception, and subtlety of mind. The whole country is turning into Scarlett O'Hara. You heard me, Scarlett O'Hara:

> But Scarlett intended to marry—and marry Ashley—and she was willing to appear demure, pliable, and scatterbrained if those were the qualities that attracted men. Just why men should be this way, she did not know. She only knew that such methods worked. It never interested her enough to try to think out the reason for it, for she knew nothing of the inner workings of any human being's mind, not even her own. She knew only that if she did or said thus-and-so, men would unerringly respond with the complementary thus-and-so. It was like a mathematical formula and no more difficult, for mathematics was the one subject that had come easy to Scarlett in her schooldays.

Every American is expected to be a "people person," yet we dare not go from A to B in assessing them, on pain of death from our internal censor. Instead we must judge each person we meet "as an individual," a parlor version of reinventing the wheel that precludes drawing conclusions, playing hunches, or learning anything at all that might come in handy the next time we meet an individual.

Like John McCain, we pass insight around like a hot potato, and palm perception off on "someone else" so we will not be suspected of putting two and two together. Our goal is nothing less than willful obtuseness, a condition that was displayed in all its glory by a woman on *Hardball* who illustrated the pitfalls of gay stereotyping by drawing what passes these days for an analogy.

Suppose, she said, you entered a room and saw there a man in a kilt. You would assume he was a Scotsman, wouldn't you? But he could be "an extra from *Braveheart*, [or] it might be Halloween."

Our rejection of wide-ranging ruminative thinking is a key factor in many of our woes, such as the "crisis in relationships." Men who don't generalize about women will be even more dumbfounded than those who do, while women who generalize about men will be somewhat less furious than those who don't. Every little bit helps.

Public confessions of personal behavior are deemed offensive by many, but they may serve as R&R leave in our war against stereotyping. Someone who knows himself to be an incestuous foot-fetishist might well find it a strain to be judged "as an individual" and pursued by the blockheaded furies of equality. Going on Jerry Springer with the other incestuous foot-fetishists is a way of saying, "*Now* do you get it?"

Gays especially are made uncomfortable by unanalytical people and often confess to them for reasons unrelated to braggadocio. They may simply be tired of waiting for the truth to sink in, or they may find it necessary to clear things up when a determined tabula rasa mistakes them for extras from *Deliverance*. Gays prefer heterosexuals who are worldly, raffish, nonconformist, and eccentric, not out of snobbery or decadence but because these types never meet a thought they cannot entertain—royally.

The worst damage inflicted by our fear of stereotyping is in the arts. A creative artist "just knows" things. When this river flows unimpeded the result is a Shakespeare, but when it's dammed up we get the eighth wonder of the American global village, the nonjudgmental novelist.

They're a lot like politicians. Afraid to exclude, they throw in so many characters that they end up with the big tent of Republican dreams. Afraid to differentiate, they make everybody talk alike. Afraid to dominate, they refuse to plot. Afraid to instruct, they dumb down their language.

And afraid to think, they display the *insight of Scarlett O'Hara.* **NR**

Miss King can be reached at P. O. Box 7113, Fredericksburg, Va. 22404.

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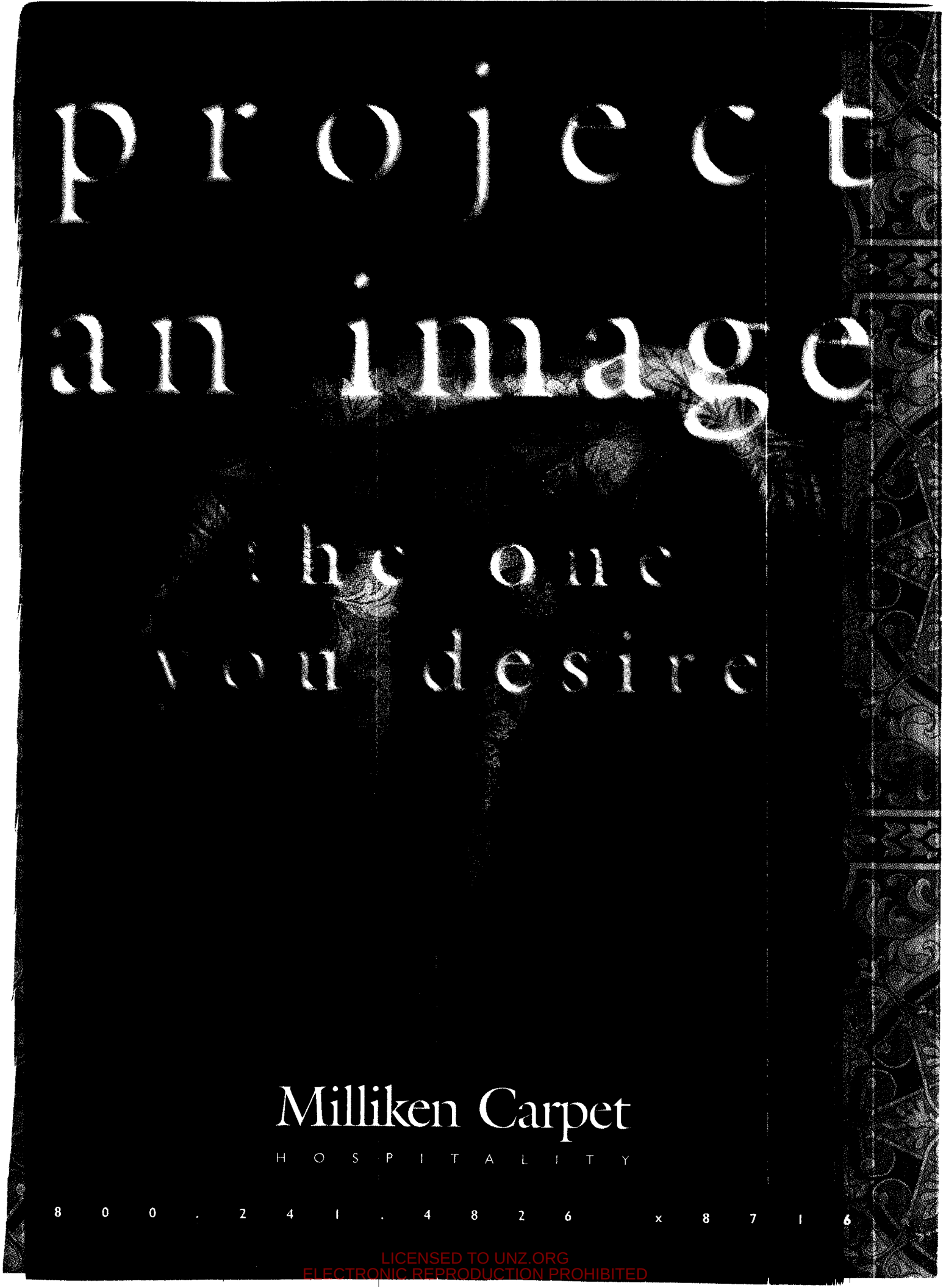

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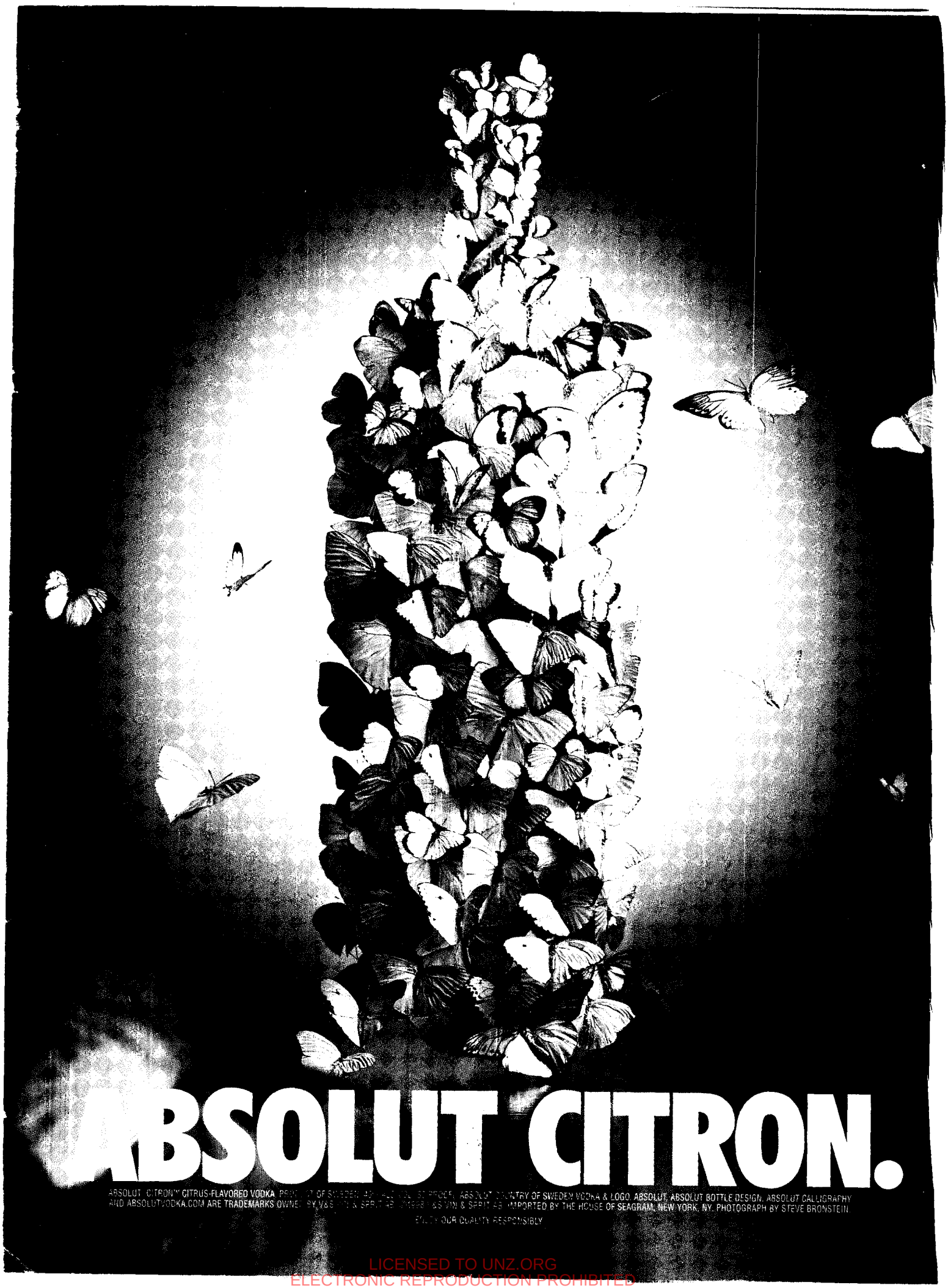
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